



U.N. Security Council meets on Ukraine, Monday March 3, 2014 at U.N. headquarters. Ukraine's mission to the United Nations claimed Monday that 16,000 Russian troops have been deployed in the strategic Crimea region, while Russia's U.N. ambassador told an emergency Security Council meeting that Ukraine's fugitive president requested them.

(AP Photo/Bebeto Matthews)

US, Europeans rally Western front vs Russia

LARA JAKES
AP National Security Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S and major allies strained on Monday to rally a strong Western front to persuade Russia to step back from a military takeover of Ukraine's strategic Crimea

region. But several acknowledged there are few options beyond already-threatened economic and diplomatic penalties, and critics said Obama administration efforts were too little, too late after years of pressing for friendlier rela-

tions with Moscow. President Barack Obama called the Russian advance in Crimea a violation of international law. He urged Congress to approve an aid package for the Ukrainian government, and repeated earlier threats that

the U.S. would take steps to hurt Russia's economy and isolate it diplomatically if President Vladimir Putin does not back down. Secretary of State John Kerry was leaving for Kiev to reinforce U.S. support for the new Ukrainian govern-

ment that only weeks ago ousted its pro-Russian president. But French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said Russia's control of Crimea would not be easy to reverse.

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US, Europeans rally Western front vs Russia

Continued from Front

And the suggestions he offered — sending in observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation, questioning Russia's membership in the Group of Eight economic organization and holding out for a diplomatic dialogue proposed by Germany — were an indication of how limited the options were for

eralization and economic cooperation negotiations that have long been in the works.

"I think the situation is relatively clear, you need to see a return to barracks," EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said in Brussels, where ministers also froze preparations for the G-8 summit of major economies that is set for June in Sochi, Russia.

In Washington, Obama declared, "The strong con-

out of Crimea — even as Ukrainian officials reported that four Russian navy ships in Sevastopol's harbor had blocked two vessels controlled by Kiev.

Russia, too, tried to steer the world debate.

At a U.N. session in Geneva, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Ukraine should return to a Feb. 21 agreement that sought to end months of unrest in Kiev by addressing an array of issues at the heart

tion to the crisis but would have to be significantly altered.

Both Kerry and Lavrov are to attend meetings in Paris on Wednesday about refugee spillover in Lebanon from the other war on a NATO border — the three-year bloody conflict in Syria. It is likely they will discuss the crisis in Ukraine.

Obama for years tried to cultivate Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, the former president, as a

UN: Iran cutting higher-enriched uranium stock

GEORGE JAHN
Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — Iran is cutting its stock of uranium that is closest to atomic weapons-grade as mandated in a deal with six world powers, the head of the U.N. nuclear agency said Monday.

But Yukiya Amano noted that the agency remains short of money to be able to monitor Tehran's compliance with the agreement. As part of the six-month interim deal, Iran is to dilute half of its 20-percent-enriched uranium to a lower grade suitable for use as reactor fuel. Amano told the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board that process "has reached the halfway mark." The other half of the uranium is to be changed into oxide, a precursor of nuclear fuel that is relatively difficult to reconvert to 20 percent. Iran has told the agency it now is working on facilities to carry out that transformation.

Uranium enriched to 20 percent is only a technical step away from the 90-percent level needed for nuclear weapons.

Last month the IAEA said Tehran's stockpile of 20 percent enriched uranium fell to 161 kilograms (354 pounds) from about 210 kilograms (more than 460 pounds) in January.

With further enrichment, about 250 kilograms (550 pounds) is considered sufficient for the fissile core of one nuclear weapon.

Amano said the IAEA is still short about 1.6 million euros (\$2.2 million) of the approximately 5.5 million euros (\$7.6 million) it needs to monitor Iran's compliance with the deal.

Tehran dismisses other nations' fears that it may want nuclear arms but has agreed to temporarily limit its atomic work in return for some sanctions relief. In the meantime, both sides are working on a fuller deal placing long-term restrictions on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for an end to all economic sanctions. □



Russian President Vladimir Putin, center, and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, left, and the commander of the Western Military District Anatoly Sidorov, right, walk upon arrival to watch military exercise near St.Petersburg, Russia, Monday, March 3, 2014. Putin has sought and quickly got the Russian parliament's permission to use the Russian military in Ukraine.

(AP Photo/Mikhail Klimentyev)

the U.S. and Europe. Still, alternately threatening and cajoling Putin, Western leaders pointed to the damage that his nation's natural gas, uranium and coal industries could suffer if sanctions cut off exports to the European Union, its largest customer.

Britain's prime minister warned of diplomatic, political, economic "and other pressures" that could be brought against Moscow. And the European Union's foreign ministers issued a Thursday deadline for Putin to pull back his troops or face a rejection of visa-lib-

demnation that has proceeded from countries around the world indicates the degree to which Russia is on the wrong side of history." "So there are really two paths that Russia can take at this point," Obama said. "Over time, this will be a costly proposition for Russia, and now is the time for them to consider whether they can serve their interests in a way that resorts to diplomacy as opposed to force."

The West stopped far short of suggesting that its own military force might be used to push Putin's troops

of the dispute between protesters and the government of then-President Viktor Yanukovich. However, that agreement did not address the grievances that caused the protests, and the pro-Russian Yanukovich fled Kiev for protective sanctuary near Moscow within days of signing it.

"Instead of a promised national unity government," Lavrov said, "a 'government of the victors' has been created."

U.S. officials say the Feb. 21 agreement could form the basis for a political resolu-

friend of the United States. Significant changes were made to Bush administration plans for a European missile defense to try to ease Russian concerns, and a new arms control treaty was signed, as part of Washington's hopes to "reset" U.S.-Russia relations. "When you implement a policy of appeasement toward Moscow, that policy is going to spectacularly backfire," said scholar Nile Gardiner of the conservative Heritage Foundation. "We've seen that with regards to Crimea and Ukraine." □

Obama: Tough choices nearing in Mideast talks

JULIE PACE

AP White House Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama pressed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

tween Obama and Netanyahu has improved after early tensions, the two leaders still wrestle with deep differences, particularly on Iran. Israel sees Iran's nuclear program as

an existential threat and fears Tehran is using U.S.-led negotiations to stall while it builds a bomb. Obama, seeking to reassure Netanyahu, affirmed his "absolute commitment

that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon."

Netanyahu insisted Monday that Iran must suspend all uranium enrichment, though any final deal between the international community and Iran would likely leave the Islamic republic with a small enrichment capacity.

"No country has a greater stake in this," said Netanyahu, who is in Washington to speak at the annual meeting of AIPAC, the largest pro-Israel lobby.

Obama, who has twice addressed the conference, is not speaking this year, though Kerry was scheduled to speak Monday night. In excerpts released ahead of his speech, Kerry outlined what he called "the end-game" in the peace negotiations. He said a peace deal must include security arrangements that leave Israel more secure, mutual recognition of states for the Jewish and Palestinian people, an end to all

conflict, a just solution for Palestinian refugees, and an resolution "that finally allows Jerusalem to live up to its name as the city of peace." Kerry has made nearly a dozen trips to the region over the past year and is seeking to get both sides to sign a framework by the end of April that would serve as a guide for negotiations on a permanent solution to the conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians. The framework aims to address the core issues in the dispute, including borders between Israel and a future Palestine, the fate of Palestinian refugees and the status of the holy city of Jerusalem. New Israeli housing statistics showed that Israel began building more than twice as many West Bank settlement homes in 2013 than it did the previous year. The Palestinians consider settlements built on territories captured by Israel in 1967 to be illegal and an obstacle to peace. □



President Barack Obama listens as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speaks during their meeting in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Monday, March 3, 2014. Seeking to keep a pair of delicate diplomatic efforts afloat, Obama will personally appeal to Netanyahu to move forward on peace talks with the Palestinians, while also trying to manage Israel's deep suspicion of his pursuit of a nuclear accord with Iran. (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais)

on Monday to make the "tough decisions" needed to move forward on talks with the Palestinians, as he sought to salvage an elusive Middle East peace plan. But facing a U.S.-imposed April deadline, the Israeli leader declared that, "Israel has been doing its part and, I regret to say, the Palestinians have not." Netanyahu's comments underscored the slim prospects of reaching an agreement to the long-running conflict, despite a robust effort led by Secretary of State John Kerry. Obama and Netanyahu's Oval Office meeting marked a more direct foray into the peace negotiations by Obama, who will also meet at the White House later this month with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. "It is still possible to create two states, a Jewish state of Israel and a state of Palestine, with people living side by side in peace and security," Obama said. "But it's difficult. It requires compromise on all sides." While the relationship be-

No deal yet over gays marching in Boston parade

DENISE LAVOIE

AP Legal Affairs Writer

BOSTON (AP) — A gay rights advocacy group said Monday it is pushing for gay people to be allowed to march "openly and honestly" in Boston's St. Patrick's Day parade this month, but an agreement has not been reached with parade organizers.

It appeared Saturday as if Boston Mayor Martin Walsh had brokered a deal between MassEquality and parade organizers to allow gay military veterans to march under the group's banner, but the deal was not finalized even after both sides met Sunday. The issue is whether and how members of the group can identify themselves in the parade.

"LGBT people need to be able to identify themselves as LGBT people. It's as simple as that. There's a lot of ways that can be done, and that is a conversation we're having now with organizers," MassEquality Executive Director Kara

Coredini said Monday.

A similar issue is playing out in New York City, where Mayor Bill de Blasio is skipping the nation's largest St. Patrick's Day parade because participants are not

the gay veterans to march with the MassEquality banner, but he said the veterans are insisting that they be able to carry signs and wear T-shirts identifying themselves as gay.



Boston Mayor Martin Walsh applauds as he attends a Black History Month event in Boston. The mayors of New York City and Boston say they'll boycott St. Patrick's Day parades to

allowed to carry signs or banners identifying themselves as gay.

Tim Duross, the Boston parade coordinator, said the parade sponsor, the South Boston Allied War Veterans Council, is willing to allow

Duross said organizers want the focus of the parade to be on celebrating St. Patrick's Day.

"The fact that they need to identify themselves as openly gay veterans is kind of where the stalemate lies.

I don't know why that's so important in this parade," Duross said. "We are not planning romances here. We are just putting on a parade."

Duross said the parade sponsors plan to discuss the MassEquality request during a meeting Tuesday night.

The mayor said all parties "remain optimistic that a solution can be reached to allow for an inclusive celebration."

The parade sponsor has had a history of turning away organized gay groups.

In 1992 and 1993, state courts forced the group to allow the Irish-American Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston to march in the parade. In 1994, the group canceled the parade rather than allow the gay group to participate. In 1995, the sponsors said the parade would commemorate the role of traditional families in Irish history and protest the earlier court rulings. □

Farmer creates granddaddy of a snowman

GILMAN, Minnesota (AP) — A farmer in Minnesota has created a towering tribute to winter's excess.

Greg Novak says he's invested hundreds of hours to build a 50-foot (15-meter) snowman named "Granddaddy" that he hopes will wake onlookers from their winter doldrums. And he admits it has some neighbors questioning his sanity.

Granddaddy began to take shape earlier this winter when the Gilman farmer needed to move mounting snow piles away from his greenhouses.

"As long as you're moving it, might as well do something practical with it," Novak said.

Friends and family pitched in to help with Granddaddy, or to do farm chores while Novak worked on building the snowman. Novak used skid loaders to pile snow and a silage blower to direct snow into

stacked cylinders, the St. Cloud Times reported.

Gerald and Diane Harbarth were among the amused onlookers Sunday.

They drove more than 70 miles from Brownton to get a look at the mammoth snowman.

The Harbarths learned

about Granddaddy on a television news report, but craning their necks to see it in person was something else entirely. □



Greg Novak stands next to the giant 50-foot snowman he created by in Gilman, Minn., on Sunday, March 2, 2014. Novak says he's invested hundreds of hours to build a 50-foot snowman named "Granddaddy" that he hopes will wake onlookers from their winter doldrums. And he admits it has some neighbors questioning his sanity. Granddaddy began to take shape earlier this winter when the Gilman farmer needed to move mounting snow piles away from his greenhouses.

(AP Photo/Jason Wachter)

Snow shuts down Washington again

WASHINGTON (AP) — Winter weather shut down much of Washington on Monday, although the snowfall wasn't bad as predicted.

Snow covered a thin layer of ice in the capital city early Monday, and officials warned people to stay off treacherous roads. Schools were canceled, bus service was halted in places and federal government workers in the DC area were told to stay home Monday.

Up to 8 inches (20 centimeters) of snow were forecast from Baltimore to Washington — lower than earlier predictions but enough to cause headaches for the region.

The latest frigid blow of the harsh winter threatened as much as 10 inches (25 centimeters) of snow by the end of the day in Washington, Baltimore and elsewhere in the Mid-Atlantic region. □



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Dak Rice Architectural Photography

First lady plans March 19-26 visit to China

DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Michelle Obama plans a weeklong solo visit to China this month that includes meetings with China's first lady and high school and university students. It will be her first visit to the

Asian economic powerhouse.

In an announcement Monday on the White House blog, the first lady says a China visit is important because it is the most populous country in the world, with more than 1.3 billion people, and plays an im-

portant role on the world stage.

The White House says Mrs. Obama will travel from March 19-26. She will spend several days in the capital of Beijing, followed by stops in the central city of Xian and the southwestern city of Chengdu. Her

schedule includes a meeting with Peng Liyuan, the wife of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Mrs. Obama missed meeting China's first lady last June when the newly installed Xi, accompanied by his wife, traveled to Southern California for a summit with President Barack Obama. Mrs. Obama stayed in Washington for personal reasons. She wrote a letter to Peng Liyuan welcoming her to the U.S. and expressing hope that they would meet soon in China, the White House said.

In China this month, Mrs. Obama will focus on the power and importance of education, including in her own life, during visits to a high school and a university in Beijing, and a high school in Chengdu.

She recently began an effort at home to encourage America's young people, including some of the most economically disadvantaged, to pursue a college education. On past trips outside the U.S., she

also has stressed the same points to students from the host country. Mrs. Obama grew up in a poor Chicago family, but ended up with degrees from two of America's best schools.

In China, she will be accompanied by daughters, Malia and Sasha, and her mother, Marian Robinson, who lives at the White House. President Barack Obama will not be on the trip. He departs the U.S. later that week for stops in Europe and Saudi Arabia.

Mrs. Obama is encouraging students across the U.S. to follow her trip on social media and the White House website, where she will post a daily travel blog. In preparation for the trip, she scheduled a visit Tuesday to a Washington charter elementary school with a Chinese-immersion, international baccalaureate program. Mrs. Obama will hear a presentation from sixth-graders who visited China last year and visit with pre-kindergarten students who are learning Chinese. □



First lady Michelle Obama eats healthy snacks with children during a visit to La Petite Academy in Bowie, Md., to promote healthy environments and encouraging healthy habits at preschools as part of her Let's Move! Child Care program. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster)

Supreme Court skeptical of IQ scores in deciding execution

MARK SHERMAN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. Supreme Court indicated Monday that states should look beyond an intelligence test score in borderline cases of mental disability to determine whether a death row inmate is eligible to be executed.

Twelve years after the court barred execution of the mentally disabled, the justices heard arguments about how states evaluate claims of mental disability that, if substantiated, protect inmates from being put to death.

Five justices, enough to form a majority, pointed repeatedly to the margin of error inherent in IQ and other standardized tests. They voiced skepticism about the practice in Florida and certain other states of barring an inmate from claiming mental disability when his IQ score is just above 70.

"Your rule prevents us from

getting a better understanding of whether the IQ score is accurate or not," Kennedy told Florida Solicitor General Allen Winsor. Kennedy and the four liberal justices objected to Winsor's argument that there is no room for flexibility when an IQ score tops 70.

That score is widely accepted as a marker of mental disability, but medical professionals say people who score as high as 75 can be considered intellectually disabled because of the test's margin of error. In any case, there is a consensus that the test score should be just one factor in determining mental disability.

Lawyers for inmate Freddie Lee Hall said there is ample evidence to show that he is mentally disabled, even though most of his multiple IQ tests have yielded scores topping 70. Hall has been on death row for more than 35 years since being convicted of mur-

dering a pregnant 21-year-old woman in 1978.

Winsor said abandoning the 70-point IQ cutoff could double the number of death row inmates who claim they are mentally disabled.

Justice Antonin Scalia pointed to the brutality of

Hall's crime and the several steps it took to abduct and kill the pregnant woman, and a sheriff's deputy a short time later, as indications that Hall seemed to have sufficient mental capability. The justice also noted that Hall, 68, did not raise a claim of mental dis-

ability for the first 10 years of his time in prison.

A judge in an earlier phase of the case concluded Hall "had been mentally retarded his entire life." Psychiatrists and other medical professionals who examined him said he is mentally disabled. □

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Bin Laden son-in-law on trial in New York City

LARRY NEUMEISTER
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Osama

bin Laden's son-in-law was introduced to prospective jurors Monday at the start

of his trial on charges that he conspired to kill Americans and support terror-

ists in his role as al-Qaida's spokesman after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Sulaiman Abu Ghaith is the highest-ranking al-Qaida figure to face trial on U.S. soil since the 9/11 attacks. The government plans to show jurors during its opening statement a picture of Abu Ghaith seated with bin Laden and other al-Qaida leaders on the day after Sept. 11, 2001, as they make statements about the attacks.

U.S. District Judge Lewis A. Kaplan asked Abu Ghaith to turn and face the potential jurors before asking if any knew him. None did. The judge drew silence as well when he asked if there was anyone who had never heard of al-Qaida.

The questioning was part of a process designed to shrink a jury pool of dozens of prospective jurors to the 12 anonymous jurors and several alternates necessary before opening statements begin as early as Wednesday.

The trial, expected to last about three weeks, began a year after Abu Ghaith was brought to the United States following his capture in Jordan.

Kaplan told prospective jurors that the intent of the trial was to decide whether Abu Ghaith had conspired to kill Americans, whether he conspired to provide material support and resources to terrorists and whether he actually supplied material support and resources to terrorists.

Prosecution evidence also will include post-9/11 videos in which the charismatic bearded man promises more attacks on the United States as devastating as those that destroyed the World Trade Center.

"The Americans must know that the storm of airplanes will not stop, God willing, and there are thousands of young people who are as keen about death as Americans are about life," In one widely circulated propaganda video, Abu Ghaith can be seen sitting with bin Laden and current al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahri against a rocky backdrop.

Defense lawyers for the balding and bearded defendant, who wore a beige suit to court Monday, asserted last week that some of the government's evidence relates to a detainee at Guantanamo Bay with a similar name to Abu Ghaith rather than to the defendant, who has pleaded not guilty. Kaplan on Friday called the mistaken identity claim "utterly meritless."



In this courtroom sketch, Sulaiman Abu Ghaith, center, is flanked by his legal team Monday, March 3, 2014 during jury selection at the start of his trial in New York on charges that he conspired to kill Americans and support terrorists in his role as al-Qaida's spokesman after the Sept. 11 attacks. Abu Ghaith is Osama bin Laden's son-in-law and is the highest-ranking al-Qaida figure to face trial on U.S. soil since the Sept. 11 attacks. Seated at right is defense attorney Stanley Cohen. (AP Photo/Elizabeth Williams)

\$2M settlement reached in caged children case

JOHN SEEWER
Associated Press
TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — Eleven

U.S. children forced to sleep in cages by their adoptive parents reached a \$2 million settlement with an Ohio county where three of them lived before they were placed in the home outfitted with wire and wood enclosures.

The agreement, which still needs a judge's approval, likely will bring a close to the series of lawsuits and finan-

cial settlements that came after the children were taken out of the home in 2005. The adopted and foster children ranged in age from 1 to 14 when authorities removed them from their home. Their adoptive parents, Michael and Sharen Gravelle, spent two years in prison for abusing some of the children.

The Gravelles, who said they used the cages to protect children they said acted up and were destruc-

tive, lost custody in 2006.

All 11 of the children were placed with foster parents. The oldest two are in college and have used the money from earlier settlements to pay for tuition, said Jack Landskroner, an attorney for the children.

The rest are doing well, Landskroner said, though some scars remain. The children were wrongly portrayed as troubled during the trial of the Gravelles, he said.

"These kids were good kids," Landskroner said. "It's amazing the positive results you see on children who are placed in a loving, caring home."

There have been seven public and private financial settlements with counties and agencies that had a role in placing the children in the home and some of the professionals who were charged with their placement and overseeing their care. □

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US Financial Front:

Buffett: American economy continues to grow steadily

JOSH FUNK

AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Nebraska (AP) — Investor Warren Buffett says

a moderate rate, despite swings in investors' mood.

"The American economy for five years has been

moving at a fairly steady rate upwards —not as fast as people would like — but I think that absolutely con-

tinues now," he said.

But Buffett said he doesn't make investment decisions based on the economy or world events, and Berkshire continued buying an unnamed stock in the United Kingdom Monday. He said he focuses on the prospects of the business in which he's investing, and the price.

The Russian military advance into part of Ukraine over the weekend shouldn't prompt investors to sell stocks in good businesses in the United States, Buffett said.

"People react too much to short-term things in the stock market whereas they behave quite rationally when they get into other investments," he said. Buffett addressed a variety of topics in the three-hour long television interview.

Buffett said it's clear that railroad tank cars carrying crude oil need to be updated because oil from certain regions is more

dangerous than originally thought.

Berkshire Hathaway owns the BNSF railroad and a manufacturer of tank cars. "There will be changes made and there should be changes made," Buffett said.

Buffett said the crude oil from the Bakken oil field in North Dakota and Montana and the Eagle Ford oil field in south Texas has proven more volatile than anticipated.

That volatility may have contributed to several fiery derailments in the past year, including one in Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, last summer that killed 47 people.

Buffett reiterated Monday that he thinks it's a good idea to build the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. TransCanada wants to construct to carry Canadian oil south across the Great Plains to connect to Gulf Coast refineries. □



Berkshire Hathaway CEO and Chairman Warren Buffett speaks during an interview in Omaha, Neb. Buffett says the economy continues the steady improvement that began in fall of 2009 and he remains optimistic despite Russia's advance into Ukraine.

(AP Photo/Nati Harnik)

the economy continues the steady improvement that began in fall of 2009 and he remains optimistic despite Russia's advance into Ukraine.

Buffett appeared on the business cable channel CNBC Monday morning after releasing an upbeat annual letter to his Berkshire Hathaway Inc. shareholders over the weekend. Buffett is chairman and CEO of the Omaha, Neb., conglomerate.

Buffett said the reports he gets from Berkshire's 80-odd subsidiaries in a variety of industries show that the economy is growing at

US construction spending up 0.1 percent in January

M. CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. construction spending showed a tiny increase in January as strength in housing helped to offset declines in nonresidential building and government projects.

Construction spending edged up 0.1 percent in January, significantly slower than an upwardly revised 1.5 percent gain in December, the Commerce Department reported Monday.

Home building was up 1.1 percent in January with single-family construction rising 2.3 percent and apartment building up 1 percent. However, there was widespread weakness outside of housing. Non-residential construction fell 0.2 percent and office building was flat, with bad weather likely a factor in the weakness.

Total government construction was down 0.8 percent in January compared with December.

Construction spending to-

taled \$943.1 billion in January at a seasonally adjusted annual rate.

The 1.1 percent rise in housing construction was just half of the 2.5 percent gain in December.

Economists had expected the January weakness, believing that construction, like other parts of the economy, would be slowed by the unusually cold weather. However, the expectation is that builders will see better gains once spring and warmer weather arrive.

Most economists are look-

ing for sales of new and existing homes to show further gains in 2014, bolstered by an improving economy and steady job growth.

Sales of new homes rose 9.6 percent in January to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 468,000. It was the fastest pace since July 2008. The surge came as a surprise to economists. Most had expected a decline in January, in part because they thought purchases would be held back by winter storms in much of the country. □

Experts: March will be big test of US auto demand

DEE-ANN DURBIN

TOM KRISHER

AP Auto Writers

DETROIT (AP) — March is the month to watch for the U.S. auto industry.

Sales have been slower than expected so far this year. As the spring thaw begins, automakers will see if the slowdown was due to historic cold temperatures

and snowfall — as many believe — or if there are deeper reasons for sagging demand. “March will give us a sense of how real the recovery is

going to be this year,” said Alec Gutierrez, a senior analyst for Kelley Blue Book. Automakers entered 2014 expecting to sell more than 16 million cars and trucks for the first time since the recession. But so far, sales are on pace to hit around 15 million, which would be 600,000 less than last year. But Gutierrez believes sales will recover reach 16.3 million for the year. The industry sold 16.1 million vehicles in 2007.

“We think there is still plenty of time left this year for sales to rebound and kind of get us back on that pace,” he said.

On Monday, General Motors, Ford and Toyota all reported U.S. sales declines for February. The country's top three automakers by sales said the month started slowly but sales began to recover in the second half. If that momentum continues into March, fears of a broader sales slowdown may prove to be unfounded.

Industry analysts expect overall sales to rise about 1 percent for the month, a slow pace compared with the 8 percent increase for all of last year.

Dealer inventories, especially for the Detroit automakers, have hit their highest level in five years, putting pressure on companies to clear their lots. At the end of January, dealers had an 89-day supply of cars and trucks, according to Ward's AutoInfo-Bank. Detroit automakers had the most, with General Motors at 114 days, followed by Ford at 107 and Chrysler at 105. A 60-day supply of vehicles is considered ideal.

Chrysler and Nissan were able to notch double-digit gains, but discounted some key models to get there. That points to another potential problem if automakers have to offer steeper discounts to shrink their inventories.

For consumers, it means deals. Incentives are the highest they've been in three years, averaging \$2,633 per vehicle in February, up more than 5 percent from a year ago, according to TrueCar.com, a car buying site.

Larry Dominique, executive vice president of TrueCar, said automaker spending on discounts is growing faster than average sales prices, but he predicted that the bargains will wane as the weather gets warmer and customers go shopping again. “We expect a return to balance once the winter subsidies and inventories ease,” he said.

GM sold just over 222,000 cars and trucks in February, led by the Chevrolet Cruze compact car, with sales up almost 22 percent. But sales of the Chevy Silverado pickup, GM's top-selling vehicle, fell 12 percent for the month. GM's overall sales fell 1 percent.

Ford's sales fell 6 percent to 184,000 vehicles. Sales of the F-Series pickup, its top-selling vehicle, rose just under 3 percent.

Toyota sales fell 4 percent to just over 159,000 cars and trucks. □



2014 Chrysler Fiat 500L is displayed at the Chicago Auto Show at McCormick Place in Chicago. To unload the inventory, automakers are offering more discounts. Incentives are the highest they've been in three years, averaging \$2,633 per vehicle in February, according to the TrueCar.com auto pricing site. (AP photo/Nam Y. Huh)

American manufacturing boosted by new orders

C. S. RUGABER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. manufacturing expanded more quickly last month as companies received more orders and boosted their stockpiles.

A measure of production fell to its lowest level in nearly five years, likely a casualty of severe winter weather. But the rise in orders raises the possibility that factory output will rebound in coming months, economists said.

The Institute for Supply Management, a group of purchasing managers, said Monday that its manufacturing index rose to 53.2 in February from 51.3 in January. The increase only partly reversed a five-point drop in January from December.

Still, any reading above 50 signals growth. And economists were encouraged by the increase in both new and backlogged orders.

Growth in February was also broad-based: Fourteen of the 18 industries that are tracked by the survey reported growth. That was up from 11 industries in January. The industries reporting expansion

normalize,” said Joseph LaVorgna, an economist at Deutsche Bank.

A gauge of employment was unchanged at 52.3, suggesting that factories added only a modest number of jobs last month.



Jesus Rodriguez grinds steel at the IDEAL Group in Detroit. The Institute for Supply Management reported on U.S. manufacturing activity in February on Monday, March 3, 2014. (AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

included machinery, plastics, transportation equipment and paper products. “We expect a substantial rebound ... when weather patterns eventually

Bradley Holcomb, chair of the ISM's survey committee, said many businesses blamed bad weather for a slowdown in their output.

“Other comments reflect optimism in terms of demand and growth in the near term,” Holcomb said. The production index fell to its lowest level since May 2009. And the slowdown in output caused manufacturers' stockpiles of raw materials and parts to surge by the most in 25 years.

The weather also disrupted the shipping of raw materials, leaving manufacturers with only some of the supplies they needed to produce goods, Holcomb said. That slowed production and left more parts sitting in warehouses, thereby swelling inventories.

The report coincided with data showing that China's manufacturing weakened in February and that employers cut staff at the fastest rate in nearly five years. It was further evidence that growth in the world's second-largest economy is cooling. □

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Witness at Pistorius trial recalls hearing screams

C. TORCHIA
GERALD IMRAY
Associated Press
PRETORIA, South Africa (AP)

— “Bang ... bang, bang, bang.”

The murder trial of Oscar Pistorius opened Monday in South Africa with testimony from a neighbor who described the sound of what she said were four gunshots and recalled the “blood-curdling screams” of a woman who prosecutors say was the girlfriend slain by the onetime star athlete in his home.

“It’s the most helpless feeling I’ve ever had in my life,” university lecturer Michelle Burger said of listening to the screams. “I knew something terrible was happening in that house.” The 27-year-old double-amputee runner, whose stature peaked at the 2012 London Olympics and then plummeted when he shot model and television personality Reeva Steenkamp in the pre-dawn hours of Valentine’s Day last year, stood in the dock in a dark gray suit and black tie, writing in a pad and sometimes passing notes to defense lawyers. At one point, he smiled at a person sitting behind him. Steenkamp’s mother, June, sat near Pistorius but there was no communication between them.

The proceedings were broadcast on television, though Burger was not shown at her own request, and millions of people around the world followed a trial where the heady mix of a celebrity defendant and shocking allegations has drawn comparisons to the O.J. Simpson case two decades ago.

Prosecutors allege that Pistorius, who has been free on bail, shot Steenkamp after an argument. He has

said he killed her after mistaking her for a nighttime intruder in his home, shooting her through the closed door of the toilet cubicle in his bathroom. Steenkamp, 29, was hit three times — in the head, elbow and hip area; a fourth bullet did not

hit her.

Early testimony focused on whether the screams that Burger said she heard were those of a terrified woman about to be shot to death, as prosecutors allege, or were instead Pistorius’ desperate shrieks for help after

a fatal mistake, as his defense lawyers contend.

Burger, who lives about 180 meters (196 yards) from Pistorius’ house, gave her account of the sequence of events in the pre-dawn hours of Feb. 14 last year.

“I was woken up by a wom-

an’s petrified screams. I heard her screaming first,” Burger said. “Then I heard her call for help. Then I heard a man call for help three times. I then made a call. ... I gave the phone to my husband and he spoke to security. Afterward, I heard the woman’s petrified screams again.”

Burger said she then heard four gunshots, with a gap between the first shot and the rest, and more screaming.

“I heard her voice during the shots,” she said. “Shortly after the shots was the last time I heard that woman.” The chief defense lawyer, Barry Roux, opened his cross-examination by asking Burger if she thought Pistorius was a liar. She didn’t directly answer that, but questioned Pistorius’ version.

“I can only tell the court what I heard that evening,” Burger said. “I cannot understand how I could clearly hear a woman scream but Mr. Pistorius could not hear it.” □



Oscar Pistorius, center, is escorted out of the high court after the first day of his trial in Pretoria, South Africa, Monday, March 3, 2014. Pistorius is charged with murder with premeditation in the shooting death of girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp in the pre-dawn hours of Valentine’s Day 2013.

(AP Photo)

New clashes in southern Damascus halt aid

ALBERT AJI
DIAA HADID
Associated Press

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP) — Food deliveries to thousands of people living in a blockaded area in southern Damascus ground to a halt after a truce collapsed and clashes broke out between Syrian rebels and forces loyal to the government, a U.N. official and activists said on Monday. The clashes, which erupted on Sunday afternoon and lasted until Monday morning, were the most serious violence in weeks in the Syrian capital’s Palestinian-dominated district of Yarmouk and seriously un-

dermined a tentative truce struck there in early January.

A U.N. spokesman in Damascus, Chris Gunness, urged all parties to “immediately allow” the resumption of aid to the area, where malnutrition is rife.

The U.N. “remains deeply concerned about the desperate humanitarian situation in Yarmouk, and the fact that increasing tensions and resort to armed force have disrupted its efforts to alleviate the desperate plight of civilians,” Gunness said Monday.

Activists estimate that over 100 people have died of hunger or hunger-related

illnesses since a blockade began nearly a year ago, preventing food and medical aid from entering Yarmouk. The halt in the food distribution in Yarmouk also underscores problems that bedevil a Feb. 22 U.N. Security Council resolution that called on warring parties to facilitate food and aid deliveries to Syrians in need. Also Monday, presidential adviser Bouthaina Shaaban said presidential elections would be held on time according to the constitution. That would most probably be in the spring. Shaaban said Syria would not accept international experts to monitor the vote.

“We are a sovereign country and we have credibility, we don’t need monitors,” she told the Lebanon-based Al-Mayadeen station. Shaaban had suggested earlier that the vote might not be held because of the security situation, but on Monday, she said the situation on the ground was “improving” in light of the Syrian army’s successes on the battlefield. Assad’s term expires in mid-July and he has suggested he will run again. The vote must be between 60 and 90 days before that. The latest clashes in Yarmouk sparked concerns for future aid deliveries. □

Venezuela: Capriles organizing opposition via twitter

C. SHERMAN
EZEQUIEL ABUI LOPEZ
Associated Press
CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A leader of the Venezuelan opposition called Monday for citizens to begin organizing committees that could sustain the pressure that continuing street protests have placed on the socialist government of President Nicolas Maduro. Former presidential can-

didate Henrique Capriles announced the effort via Twitter, directing people to a blog post that laid out plans for the so-called popular defense committees. In an apparent effort to organize and expand the opposition base, he said politics would be set aside, but that could be difficult in a country so polarized. Venezuela faces inflation that reached 56 percent last year, shortages of basic commodities and one of the highest rates of violent crime in the

world. "Leave aside the political agenda and violence which the government wants to draw us into, so that we can concentrate on the social problems that affect all of us," Capriles' statement said. The objective is to create a "great social movement" to press for change in the country. The groups could begin with as few as three people: a coordinator, a logistics chief and someone in charge of publicity. Each of those members would be asked to get 10 more to join. The groups would meet to discuss problems in their community and potential solutions. The protests have so far been mostly concentrated in middle class neighborhoods, including thousands who took to the streets on Sunday. The opposition faces the challenge of eroding Maduro's base of support among



Demonstrators use a giant slingshot to launch stones at Bolivarian National Guards during clashes in Caracas, Venezuela. Since mid-February, anti-government activists have been protesting high inflation, shortages of food stuffs and medicine, and violent crime in a nation with the world's largest proven oil reserves.
(AP Photo/Rodrigo Abd)

ple: a coordinator, a logistics chief and someone in charge of publicity. Each of those members would be asked to get 10 more to join. The groups would meet to discuss problems in their community and potential solutions. The protests have so far been mostly concentrated in middle class neighborhoods, including thousands who took to the streets on Sunday. The opposition faces the challenge of eroding Maduro's base of support among

had talked of doing before the protests erupted, but had done very little of. Capriles attached a list of previously articulated demands, including the release student protesters and fellow opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, who was jailed Feb. 18 on charges of instigating violence. He is the governor of Miranda state and narrowly lost an election last year to replace former President Hugo Chavez following his death. □

total fine after finding that the world's biggest gold mining company committed 23 separate infractions at the \$8.5 billion Pascua Lama project. It ordered separate fines for each failure to follow the environmental permit. Barrick acknowledged 22 of the

Chile court rejects \$16M Barrick Gold fine

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Chile's environmental court has overturned a \$16 million fine against Barrick Gold for failing to keep its promises at the world's highest gold mine. The court said Monday that Chile's environmental regulator should not have applied a single

23 problems and is working to fix them, but denied that a huge containment wall needs changes to better protect the valley below. Diaguita Indians who feel threatened by potential runoff in their rivers are trying to block the Canadian company's project. □

Without Chavez's charisma and army background, Maduro has dramatically expanded the military's role in government, appointing more than 300 uniformed or retired officials to political positions, including a quarter of Cabinet posts. □

Chavez cult no match for Venezuela's crisis

JOSHUA GOODMAN
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — A year after Hugo Chavez's death, dozens of mourners still trek daily to his mausoleum atop a hillside slum overlooking downtown Caracas. There, in the century-old military barracks where Hugo Chavez commanded a failed 1992 coup, El Comandante rests in a marble tomb flanked by soldiers wearing the hussar-style uniform that independence hero Simon Bolivar favored, including a tight jacket adorned with gold braid and a tall black hat with a chin strap. "Every day I pray to God to care for Chavez's soul," said Raimundo Villanueva, who traveled five hours by bus from the northeastern town of Anaco to pay his tearful respects. "He meant everything to me. He was my brother, my uncle, my friend, my comrade." Such devotion has been a crucial, but fading force for Chavez's hand-picked successor, President Nicolas Maduro.

Despite daily invocations of his mentor, and control of the powerful party apparatus he inherited, Maduro is increasingly on his own in a fight against a destabilizing wave of anti-government protests fueled by the less-heralded aspects of Chavez's legacy: rampant crime, 56 percent inflation and widespread shortages of staples from corn flour to toilet paper.

"Maduro has done everything within his power to use the Chavez cult against the economic crisis, but it's a lopsided battle," said Alberto Barrera Tyszka, author of a 2004 biography of Chavez. "Every day that goes by he's less and less seen as Chavez's heir."

While the crisis besetting Venezuela has its origins in Chavez's state-centered management of the oil-rich economy, the late president still stands larger than life among traditional have-nots like Villanueva, the owner of a fast-food stand who credits Chavez's 21st century socialism for being able to send his three children to college.

But even many government supporters see Maduro as an inferior version of Chavez, who was a master of theatrics with an infectious vision of Latin American solidarity against the U.S. "empire."

While Maduro still orders arrests and issues stern threats to "fascist" opponents on hours-long television marathons, his political instincts frequently seem off-key, sometimes literally, as when he burst into an ear-splitting rendition of Ruben Blades' salsa classic "Plastico" at a recent rally. By contrast, Chavez's booming baritone has been immortalized on radio and television, as well as cellular phone ring tones, which regularly blast out his stirring performance of an army hymn in his final public appearance before undergoing cancer surgery. "Chavez had an enormous appetite for power," said Tyszka. "He wanted eternity. But with Maduro you get the sense that all he wants is to politically survive the crisis." To mark Chavez's passing, Maduro has decreed a 10-day-long commemoration — three days more than the weeklong official mourning period following his death at age 58 on March 5, 2013. A military parade and activities with leftist allies from around Latin America are planned, with tributes centered around the mausoleum where Maduro attends a cannon salute at 4:25 p.m. on the 5th of every month to mark the exact time of Chavez's death.

Without Chavez's charisma and army background, Maduro has dramatically expanded the military's role in government, appointing more than 300 uniformed or retired officials to political positions, including a quarter of Cabinet posts. □



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Brazil's Carnival turns focus to glitzy and exotic parades

JENNY BARCHFIELD
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — Brazil is known for its exotic fauna, but the creatures on display Sunday night for the opening round of Rio's exuberant Carnival parade were a motley crew even by local standards. Full grown adults dressed up as Nemo the fish rubbed shoulders with weightlifting wolves with enviable six-packs, while bare-breasted dancers gyrated atop floats shaped like giant crustaceans or bedecked with XXL ants. The Carnival competition sees the city's top samba groups, or schools, parade in the Sambadrome, each delivering an over-the-top,

hour-long display aimed at capturing the annual title. No excess is deemed too much, and each year the bar is raised that much higher. Sunday's all-night-long displays saw a float shaped like a mammoth wedding cake presided over by a larger-than-life Pope Francis, a herd of elderly gentlemen in jewel-toned bull costumes complete with sequin-covered horns, and a dancing teepee surrounded by native Brazilians in green feather headdresses. Though each school ostensibly has a theme, the costumes are often so varied and sometimes unidentifiable that it can be hard to identify the common thread.



Performers from the Salgueiro samba school parade during carnival celebrations at the Sambadrome in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Monday, March 3, 2014.

(AP Photo/Nelson Antoine)

Imperio da Tijuca, the school that opened this year's competition, was ostensibly fielding an African theme, so its huge crab-shaped float was a perplexing choice. Manguei-

ra, one of the most famous schools known for its distinctive green and pink colors, turned to Carnival itself for a parade that feted Brazil's traditional celebrations in a sea of salmon pink and

lime green feathers. Each school has legions of loyal followers, many of whom parade for the same group for decades or root for their favorite from the bleachers. □

Arrests rise in march for jailed Mexican drug lord

CULIACAN, Mexico (AP)

— The number of people reported arrested during a demonstration in favor of captured drug lord Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman rose to 211 Monday, as outrage grew over what some fear is the glorification of a man considered the hemisphere's most powerful trafficker. "As a Mexican citizen, this really makes me indignant," Attorney General Jesus Murillo Karam said of Sunday's demonstration. "It cannot be that someone who has bragged about killing and injuring and hurting so many people could be defended in this way." Police and local courts earlier reported that about 100 people had been detained as police tried to break up the protest in Guzman's home state of Sinaloa in northern Mexico. By early

Monday, the final tally of those detained on disturbing-the-peace charges had more than doubled. Marchers chanted "Freedom!" and "Chapo!" as they walked the streets of Culiacan, the Sinaloa state capital, and carried signs opposing possible extradition of the drug lord to the U.S., something Mexican authorities have already said won't happen soon. Local Judge Gabriel Pena Gonzalez said all but 30 of the 211 people arrested at the protest had been freed. Many paid fines that averaged about 500 pesos (\$37) apiece, but others said they had been unfairly detained just because they were walking in the area. Protester Aida Hermosillo complained about the heavy presence of local and federal police at the march. □



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Bitcoin trader Kolin Burges stands in protest outside an office building housing the now bankrupt Mt. Gox in Tokyo.
(AP Photo/Shizuo Kambayashi)

Tokyo's Mt. Gox Bitcoin exchange looks into new criminal complaint

YURI KAGEYAMA
AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — The Tokyo bitcoin exchange that filed for bankruptcy protection blamed theft through hacking for its losses Monday, and said it was looking into a criminal complaint. In an announcement posted on the Mt. Gox exchange's website, CEO Mark Karpeles outlined the events that resulted in the company's insolvency and said there was a "high probability" theft was behind the disappearance of bitcoins.

"We will make all efforts to ensure that crimes are punished and damages recovered," Karpeles said. He said Mt. Gox will try to resume business as a way of increasing repayments to its creditors.

The online exchange was unplugged early last week as rumors of its insolvency swirled, adding to doubts about the viability of bitcoins overall. Its woes are a setback for bitcoin, a virtual currency that has grown in popularity since its 2009 creation as a way to make transactions across borders without third parties such as banks.

Bitcoin has also become a highly speculative form of investing. But it has come with risks, as the Mt. Gox debacle has illustrated, partly because bitcoins are not regulated by central banks or other financial authorities.

The statement said illegal access to Mt. Gox in early February abused a bug in

its computer system.

It also said "large discrepancies" were found between the amount of cash held in financial institutions and the amount deposited by users, meaning that about 2.8 billion yen (\$28 million) was unaccounted for.

Karpeles said Friday that 750,000 bitcoins deposited by users and another 100,000 belonging to the company disappeared. That would amount to about \$425 million at recent prices.

He repeated the bitcoin numbers in Monday's statement but said also the complete extent is not yet known. A huge number of transactions must be investigated for a variety of problems to establish the truth, Karpeles said.

Mt. Gox set up a call center at a Tokyo telephone number, open during business hours Monday through Friday, to answer any queries. Karpeles promised to cooperate with the authorities in Japan and overseas in ongoing investigations, and said an expert had been asked to investigate a possible criminal complaint.

"All efforts will now be made to restore the business and recover damages to repay debts to creditors. We hope for the understanding and cooperation of all," he said.

Bitcoin proponents have insisted that Mt. Gox is an isolated case, caused by the company's technological failures. □

China: high-interest web banks soaring

DAVID BARBOZA
© 2014 New York Times

SHANGHAI — In June, an affiliate of the Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba made an offer to its hundreds of millions of users: Give us your cash and we will pay more than Chinese banks will.

Savers swamped the company seeking interest rates that were significantly

higher than Jiao Tong University's Advanced Institute of Finance. "People want to get a higher yield on their savings deposits, and so this is one way to get around the regulation."

Jack Ma, Alibaba's flamboyant and sharp-tongued chairman, insists China's financial regulations are suffocating smaller investors and average consumers.

cent, play down the risks of their new investment products. They say they are operating within the law and putting the cash to work in investments that carry low risk.

There are, of course, serious challenges ahead for Internet finance in China, analysts say. For instance, although the online deposits are promoted as if they



Zhou Xiaoming, of Tianhong Asset Management, who collaborated with Alibaba to launch Yu'e Bao, a money market product that pays more than banks for deposits, in Beijing, Feb. 12, 2014. Products like Yu'e Bao are intensifying competition for deposits and putting pressure on the country's state-run banks, which are struggling with a severe cash squeeze.

(Sim Chi Yin/The New York Times)

higher than the low rates fixed by the government. By early February, 81 million people had signed up for the company's money market product called Yu'e Bao, which translates as "leftover treasure."

The fund, which was established by Alipay, a unit of Alibaba, now has \$40 billion in assets under management, making it the country's biggest money market fund.

Other big Chinese Internet companies have followed suit, promising even higher returns than Yu'e Bao. The result is an assault on one of the crucial instruments the Chinese government uses to manage the economy: interest rates.

"This is the beginning of interest rate liberalization," says Chang Chun, who teaches at Shang-

hai Jiao Tong University's Advanced Institute of Finance. "People want to get a higher yield on their savings deposits, and so this is one way to get around the regulation."

Jack Ma, Alibaba's flamboyant and sharp-tongued chairman, insists China's financial regulations are suffocating smaller investors and average consumers.

He has vowed to shake up the country's banking and financial services sector. "The financial industry needs spoilers to make a revolution," he said during a speech in June.

The big winners are Chinese savers, who earn up to 7 percent annually on cash deposits. Traditional banks have rarely been so generous. They now pay 3.3 percent. Not everyone is pleased. In recent weeks, critics have referred to the online products as "vampires sucking blood out of banks," and warned that investors may not be aware of the risks.

Chinese regulators said in late February that they are considering new rules to govern the sector. For their part, the leaders in Internet finance, such as Alibaba, Baidu and Ten-

were savings accounts, they are investment products that carry risk. The principle is not guaranteed, and if consumers begin to suffer losses, analysts say, there could be a flood of redemptions.

The high rates offered by products like Yu'e Bao are exposing weaknesses in China's financial system, where investors have fewer options than in the West, especially with fixed interest rates.

Major Chinese Internet companies are now disrupting those controls by offering enticing yields aimed at ordinary savers with spare cash, people like Gao Yue, a 25-year-old health care consultant in Beijing. Since October, she has put about \$15,000 into her new Yu'e Bao account. □



Celebrating our 'Diamond Jubilee,' Magnificent Twin Grand Parades close Aruba's Carnaval #60!



part saying 'goodbye' to our 'Diamond Jubilee', or 'Carnaval #60', and already looking forward to 'Carnaval #61' on Aruba, which will kick off officially in November this year, and following tradition, will close the Sunday prior to Ash Wednesday in 2015! We say Carnaval #60 is 'for the most part' closed for this year, because there is

still the official business of the 'Burning of the Momo.' The 'Burning of the Momo' is the symbolic closing of the Carnaval festivities, where bad spirits are chased away, clearing the way for a healthy and prosperous new season.

Continued on Page 32

ORANJESTAD/SAN NICOLAS -This weekend witnessed the grand finale of Aruba's world famous Carnaval, for the most

Mary Earle honored as Honorary Emerald Ambassador of Aruba!



Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very special and lovely lady who is a loyal and friendly Visitor of Aruba, at the Aruba Westin Resort as an honorary Emerald Ambassador. The new symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests

who visit Aruba for 35-or-more consecutive years. The honoree was Mrs. Mary Earle of Quincy, Massachusetts. She is the first person to receive the commemorative coin representing this award. Mary has stayed for many years at the Holiday Inn Resort and for the last five years she has stayed at the Westin. She came to Aruba

this year to celebrate her birthday and also to say goodbye to the wonderful Westin Resort and its staff. Mary loves Aruba very much because of the friendly people, safety, the climate, beaches, restaurants, great entertainment and being on Aruba is like being home for her. Mary was accompanied by her husband Mr. Charles Earle



and daughter Mrs. Lauri Parson. The commemorative coin was presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Author-

ity together with husband Charles Earle and daughter Lauri Parson at the Pago Pago restaurant at the Westin Resort. □

Gus and Mildred Anglin honored by the Aruba tourism Authority!

EAGLE BEACH - Recently the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring a very nice couple, whom are loyal and friendly Visitors of Aruba, at the Paradise Beach Villas as Ambassadors of Goodwill. The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 20 or more consecutive years. The honorees were Mr. Gus and Mrs. Mildred An-

glin from Newton Mass. Gus and Mildred are loyal members of the Paradise Beach Villas and they love Aruba very much because of the friendly people, the climate, beaches, restaurants, shopping and being on Aruba and staying at the Paradise is like being home for them. The certificates were presented by Mr. Ernest Giel representing the Aruba Tourism Authority together with Mrs. Milca Erasmus representing the Paradise Beach Villas. □

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Beach

Lisa &
Jessy

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A photograph of two women, Lisa and Jessy, walking on a sandy beach. They are both wearing bikinis and sunglasses. In the background, there are palm trees and a building.

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PALM BEACH - Fresher than Fresh, is what you are served in the popular Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill, located at De Palm Pier, between the RIU Palace Hotel and The Raddison Hotel. Mondays will no longer be just another Monday. No! It's Crazy Fish Monday at Bugaloe! Beautiful colorful platter of exquisite fish, yellow rice and rich vegetables is what you will be served from Chef Hernan-

dez' kitchen every Monday. Whether choosing Fried Fish Basket for only \$15 or a delicious Red Snapper for \$20, you wish it was Monday every day! Bugaloe is known for fun and craziness, so it was only logical Chef Marc Hernandez likes to go wild when it comes to his cooking. Caught in the morning, served at night is the true Bugaloe way, maybe this explains its popularity from the start. Cra-

zy Fish Monday is served from 5.30 p.m. till 10 p.m. Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill is open daily from 9 a.m. till midnight. Start your day of right with a delicious cappuccino, or walk in to enjoy a casual lunch in between sunbathing. A few nights a week Bugaloe is host to some of the best live bands

of Aruba, while you are savoring dinner and enjoying the beautiful Aruba Sunset! Don't forget to make one hour in the day even happier at Bugaloe's dai-

ly Happy Hour from 5 till 6 p.m. Reservations are not necessary, just follow your hips to the music and the fun and smiles saluting you! ☐

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Creamer's 75-foot putt seals HSBC Champions win

JUSTIN BERGMAN
Associated Press

SINGAPORE (AP) — Paula Creamer sank a 75-foot eagle putt on the second playoff hole against Azahara Munoz to win the HSBC Women's Champions on Sunday for her first LPGA title since the 2010 U.S. Women's Open.

Creamer's putt curled across the 18th green and then rolled slowly down the slope and directly into the hole. She ran across the green, then fell to her knees and put her head on the ground, laughing and pounding the grass.

"It's one of those putts where if you just get it in the right spot, it's going to fall down," she said. "But I could stand there all day long and putt that and I don't think get it within six, seven feet."

Creamer and Munoz finished 72 holes tied at 10-under 278, one stroke ahead of Karrie Webb, who led after every round but bogeyed three of her last six holes to give up a three-shot lead and finish third.

Creamer captured eight titles early in her career before getting her breakthrough win at a major at the U.S. Women's Open.

After that title, though, Creamer found it tough to win again. She came close on a number of occasions, only to fall short every time. Two years ago, she lost an LPGA record nine-hole playoff against Jiyai Shin at the Kingsmill Champi-



**Creamer
of the
CROP**

Paula Creamer of the U.S. celebrates as she won the HSBC Women's Champions golf tournament in Singapore Sunday, March 2, 2014.

Associated Press

onship. She was also third here in Singapore last year and finished in a tie for third twice to start this season.

"I just was struggling. I was enjoying what I was doing, but I wasn't loving it," she said. "My expectations were way too high."

In December, Creamer got engaged to Derek Heath, which she said put some of her past difficulties in perspective. Then came Sunday's victory against one of the toughest fields outside the majors, featuring 19 of the top 20 ranked players.

"It might be one of my favorite wins. ... It's been almost three years and so much has happened," she said. "Holding that trophy, gosh, it was so nice."

For much of the day, it appeared as if Webb, not Creamer, would take the trophy home. But after avoiding trouble on a tricky Serapong course at Sentosa Golf Club for much of the week, the veteran Australian stumbled late.

First, Webb's three-foot par putt on the 13th caught the edge of the hole and curled away. Then she hooked her tee shot left on the 15th, grimacing as it dropped into the water. She settled for bogey on both.

She came undone on the 18th when another errant tee shot ended up in a bunker.

Continued on page 20

AP Source: Broncos' Peyton Manning passes physical

ARNIE STAPLETON
AP Pro Football Writer
ENGLEWOOD, Colo. (AP)

— Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning passed his physical on his surgically repaired neck, clearing the way for him to play in the 2014 NFL, a per-

son with knowledge of the results told The Associated Press on Monday.

In what was considered the final formality for his return, Manning passed the exam as required by his contract that will pay him \$20 million

next season, according to the person who spoke on condition of anonymity because results of medical checkups typically aren't announced.

Manning won his fifth league MVP award last season, when he set single-

season records by passing for 5,547 yards and 55 touchdowns while guiding the Broncos to their first Super Bowl in 15 seasons.

Manning has had four neck operations, including a spinal fusion that sidelined him for all of the 2011

season. After that, he was released by Indianapolis and signed a five-year, \$96 million deal with the Broncos in March 2012.

The deal requires him to pass a physical every spring to make sure his neck is holding up. □

Kevin Harvick wins second straight at Phoenix

JOHN MARSHALL
AP Sports Writer

AVONDALE, Arizona (AP) —

Kevin Harvick charged to the front early and dominated the rest of the way on Sunday for his second straight Sprint Cup victory at Phoenix International Raceway.

Coming off a disappointing finish at the Daytona 500, Harvick had the fastest car in practice and kept it rolling in the race, leading 224 of 312 laps on the odd-shaped mile oval.

Harvick won the fall race at PIR for Richard Childress Racing after Carl Edwards ran out of fuel at the white

flag. Harvick needed no help Sunday, quickly moving to the front after starting 13th and pulling away on a series of late restarts to win in his second race with Stewart-Haas Racing.

It was Harvick's fifth Sprint Cup win at PIR, most on the career list.

Daytona 500 winner Dale Earnhardt Jr. finished second, pole sitter Brad Keselowski was third and Penske Racing teammate Joey Logano fourth.

Jeff Gordon rounded out the top five on a warm and partly cloudy day after downpours wiped out the final 32 laps of Saturday's

Nationwide race, won by Kyle Busch

Harvick won at Phoenix during the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship in the fall, giving him an outside shot at catching Jimmie Johnson for the series title in his final season with Richard Childress Racing. He came up short, but the victory and a third-place finish in the standings gave him a bit of momentum heading into for his first season with Stewart-Haas.

Harvick had a solid finish in his sights at Daytona last week before a last-lap crash dropped him to 13th. □



Kevin Harvick celebrates in Victory Lane with his crew after winning the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series auto race Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Avondale, Ariz.

Associated Press



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Henley wins playoff at Honda Classic

DOUG FERGUSON

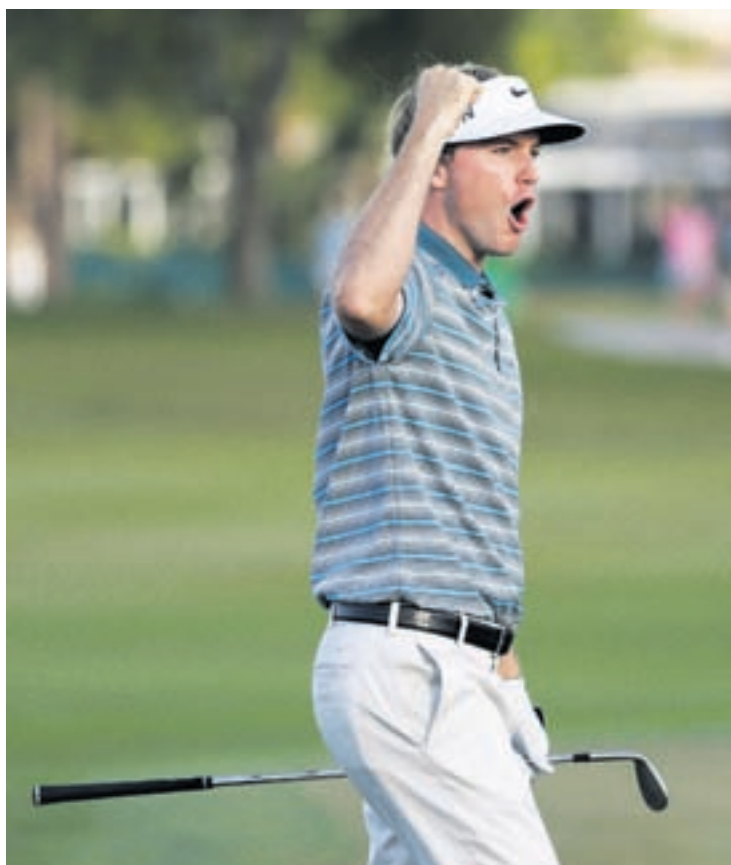
AP Golf Writer

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Florida (AP) — Russell Henley made good on his second chance at the 18th hole on Sunday and won the Honda Classic in a four-man playoff.

The closing hour was a series of blunders at PGA National, particularly by Rory McIlroy, who lost a two-shot lead by closing with a 74.

Henley was in a three-way tie for the lead, 40 yards left of the flag on the par-5 18th in regulation, when he chunked a chip so badly that it only got half-way to the hole. He had to two-putt for par, and then watched as Rory McIlroy nearly made a great escape from an otherwise bad afternoon. McIlroy, who lost a two-shot lead, hit a 5-wood from 236 yards to just inside 12 feet for an eagle and the win. It narrowly slid by on the right.

In the playoff, Henley was the only player to reach the 549-yard hole in two, and he two-putted from about 40 feet for birdie. Ryan Palmer missed a 10-foot birdie putt. McIlroy went from the back bunker



Russell Henley celebrates as he tied for the lead by chipping in for birdie on the 14th hole during the final round of the Honda Classic golf tournament, Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. Henley won the tournament after a four-man playoff.

Associated Press

to the front collar and had to scramble for par, and Russell Knox laid up and missed a 20-foot birdie attempt.

"This isn't going to sink in for a while," Henley said.

Woods abruptly quit after

13 holes and was driven straight to his car. He later said he had lower back pain and spasms, and was unsure if he could play at Doral next week. And then came all the mistakes by four players trying to win.

Palmer missed a 5-foot par in regulation that would have won it. He closed with a 69, the only player in the last six groups to break par. Knox needed a birdie on the last hole, but he went from the fairway bunker to the rough, well over the green and then calmly made a par putt just inside 10 feet for a 71 to get in the playoff.

They all finished at 8-under 272. The conditions were tough. The play was so underwhelming that McIlroy said that if he had won, "It would have felt undeserved in a way."

He won't know that feeling. Instead, the 24-year-old from Northern Ireland closed with a 74. It was his second straight tournament in stroke play that he played in the final group and shot 74. He tied for ninth in the Dubai Desert Classic. His undoing came on the 16th, when McIlroy missed on a 6-iron from the bunker and went into the water, making double bogey. He fell out of the lead for the first time with a bogey from the bunker on the 17th.

What should ease the pain was his finish — a 5-wood

he couldn't afford to miss that dropped from the sky to 12 feet left of the hole.

"I was fortunate I was in the playoff," McIlroy said. "Seventy-four wasn't good enough to get the job done. To go out with a two-shot lead, you have to play well enough to win the thing. If I had won today, I would have counted myself as lucky. I'll pick myself up, get back it, try to get back at it at Doral and try to get the job done."

Henley, who closed with a 72, won for the second time and qualified for the Masters. He also moves into the top 50 in the world ranking, making him eligible for the Cadillac Championship next week at Doral.

It was the first playoff at PGA National since 2007, which also featured four players.

McIlroy was at 13 under after a birdie on the fifth hole and appeared to be on his way, even after twice making bogey from the bunker to close out the front nine.

Henley tied for the lead by chipping in for birdie on the 14th, only to deposit his tee shot on the par-3 15th into the water for double bogey. □

HSBC

Continued on page 20

She took a big swing at the ball and it hit the lip of the bunker, plopping back down into the sand to lead to another bogey.

"I'm a bit in my head right now," Webb said after the round. "Just not a lot of good decisions."

Creamer and Munoz, meanwhile, were steady in the closing holes.

Creamer, who trailed Webb by four strokes at the start of the day, made a difficult 12-footer for birdie on the 15th to pull even with Webb at 10 under. Then, after hitting into the bunker herself on No. 18, she recovered to save par and headed to the clubhouse to wait for Munoz to finish. The Spaniard, who had trailed by five strokes early in the round, came

out of nowhere to join the leaders by sinking a 12-foot birdie putt on the 17th. She had a chance to win it on the 18th but pulled her birdie putt wide.

Webb wasn't the only one who had a disappointing day. Defending champion Stacy Lewis saw her streak of 13 consecutive top-10 finishes broken with her joint-40th place. She had been closing in on Webb's LPGA record of 16 straight top-10 finishes, set in 1998-99.

"I played terrible all week," she said. "I didn't hit the ball well or make any putts."

World No. 1 Inbee Park shot a 68 to finish in joint fourth place at 7-under 281 with No. 2 Suzann Pettersen, So Yeon Ryu, Angela Stanford and Morgan Pressel.

Michelle Wie and Teresa Lu were two strokes back in a tie for ninth. □



Paula Creamer of the U.S. poses with the champion trophy during the award ceremony of the HSBC Women's Champions golf tournament in Singapore, Sunday, Mar. 2, 2014.

Associated Press



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NHL Capsules

Senators top Canucks in Heritage Classic

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — Cody Ceci scored a second-period goal as the Ottawa Senators downed the Vancouver Canucks 4-2 before a crowd of more than 50,000 Sunday in the Heritage Classic.

The Senators posted their first win in three games and kept pace in the race for the final playoff berth in the Eastern Conference. The Canucks suffered their ninth loss in 10 games and remained on the bubble in their quest for eighth place in the Western Conference. Clarke MacArthur, Erik Karlsson and Colin Greening — into an empty-net with 1:33 left in the game — also scored for Ottawa.

The game was designed as a tribute to the 1915 Stanley Cup final series between the eventual-champion Vancouver Millionaires and Ottawa Senators. The Canucks wore maroon and cream-colored Millionaires replica jerseys while the Senators sported duds similar to those of their predecessors.

Coaches wore varsity-styled jackets rather than their usual suits.

The NHL's outdoor series was forced to go indoors as the B.C. Place Stadium roof was closed due to rain.

FLYERS 5, CAPITALS 4

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vincent Lecavalier scored at 2:45 of overtime as the Philadelphia Flyers rallied from a two-goal deficit for a victory over the Washington Capitals.

Trailing 4-2 entering the third period, the Flyers started their comeback when Jakub Voracek scored a power-play goal at 11:58. The Flyers were given a five-



San Jose Sharks' Joe Pavelski (8) throws up ice as he shoots against New Jersey Devils goalie Cory Schneider (35) during the first period of an NHL hockey game on Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Newark, N.J.

minute advantage when Dmitry Orlov was given a major penalty for boarding Brayden Schenn at 9:33.

Claude Giroux sent the game to overtime when he scored his second goal of the game with 65 seconds left in the third. Adam Hall also scored for the Flyers. Kimmo Timonen had three assists and Steve Mason made 25 saves.

Orlov scored two goals and fellow defenseman Mike Green had three assists for Washington. Marcus Johansson and Jay Beagle also scored for the Capitals in a physical game. Braden Holtby had 31 saves.

SHARKS 4, DEVILS 2

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP) — Matt Nieto scored the go-ahead goal at 6:20 of the third period and Alex Stalock made 21 saves as San Jose defeated New Jersey.

Logan Couture and Raffi Torres also scored and U.S.

Olympian Joe Pavelski had the primary assists on the tying and winning goals as the Sharks won for the fifth time in six games.

Patrick Marleau iced the game with a breakaway goal with 2:25 to play, his 25th of the season.

Adam Henrique and Patrik Elias scored for the Devils, who had a two-game, post-Olympic break winning streak snapped. Cory Schneider had 18 saves for New Jersey.

PANTHERS 5, ISLANDERS 3
UNIONDALE, New York (AP) — Scottie Upshall scored twice in the third period as part of a four-goal Panthers surge as Florida downed New York.

Upshall's 11th of the season broke a 3-3 tie at 10:31 of the final period. The goal came on the rebound of shot by Shawn Matthias, who also scored two goals for the Panthers.

Upshall tapped the loose

puck past backup goaltender Anders Nilsson, who started in place of Evgeni Nabokov. Upshall scored again at 15:26 on the power play to make it 5-3 for Florida. Tim Thomas made 35 saves for the Panthers.

The Islanders entered the third with a 3-1 advantage after Thomas Vanek scored twice in the first and Ryan Strome added a goal late in the second.

But Florida's Marcel Goc and Matthias scored early in the third to tie the game at 3 before Upshall's late scores.

BRUINS 6, RANGERS 3

NEW YORK (AP) — Tuukka Rask made 19 saves in a one-sided first period, and defenseman Dougie Hamilton had a goal and two assists to lift the Boston Bruins over the Rangers for their first season-sweep of New York in 31 years.

Rask was at his best early and finished with 39 saves.

He outdueled New York netminder Henrik Lundqvist, who stopped 27 shots on his 32nd birthday but lost for the second straight day. The Bruins are 9-2-3 in their last 14 games.

The Rangers fell one point behind second-place Philadelphia — which beat New York 4-2 on Saturday. Gregory Campbell had two goals for Boston, while Milan Lucic, Jarome Iginla and Carl Soderberg also scored.

AVALANCHE 6, LIGHTNING 3

DENVER (AP) — Nick Holden scored two goals, Ryan O'Reilly had a goal and an assist as the Colorado Avalanche rallied to beat the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Semyon Varlamov stopped 31 shots and Erik Johnson and Tyson Barrie also scored for the Avalanche, who have won two straight. Nate Thompson had two goals, Tom Pyatt also scored and Ben Bishop finished with 29 saves for the Lightning.

Holden tied it with a power-play goal at 5:12 of the third. It was Colorado's sixth power-play goal in the past three games.

BLUES 4, COYOTES 2

GLENDALE, Arizona (AP) — Patrik Berglund scored twice during St. Louis' four-goal, third-period rally as the Blues beat the Phoenix Coyotes in goaltender Ryan Miller's debut.

Miller made 23 saves in his first game since being acquired by St. Louis in a five-player deal with Buffalo on Friday. In addition to posting a 284-186-57 record in 10-plus seasons, all with the Sabres, Miller entered the game 6-0-0 with a shutout and a 1.15 goals-against average in his career against Phoenix. □

NBA Capsules

Parker returns, leads Spurs over Mavs 112-106

The Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Tony Parker had 22 points and seven assists in his return from a six-game absence, leading the San Antonio Spurs' balanced attack in a 112-106 win over the Dallas Mavericks on Sunday.

Tim Duncan scored 17 points, Kawhi Leonard added 16 and Boris Diaw had 13 points and 10 rebounds for San Antonio. Manu Ginobili had 15 points and seven assists and Tiago Splitter had 11 points as the Spurs extended their winning streak to three games.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 22 points, Vince Carter added 21 and Monta Ellis had 17 for the Mavericks, who have lost eight straight to the Spurs.

Parker looked refreshed after not playing since Feb. 10 for what was officially listed as "rest," but unofficially was due to a series of lower body maladies.

BULLS 109, KNICKS 90

CHICAGO (AP) — Joakim Noah had 13 points, 12 rebounds and 14 assists for his fifth career triple-double, leading Chicago over New



San Antonio Spurs' Tony Parker (9), of France, shoots around Dallas Mavericks' Samuel Dalembert, center, during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, March 2, 2014, in San Antonio.

York.

Chicago had seven play-

ers score in double figures in its ninth win in the last

10 games. The Bulls also reached 100 points for the fourth consecutive game for the first time since Oct. 30-Nov. 5, 2010.

D.J. Augustin had 21 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter as Chicago (33-26) improved to 21-8 since Jan. 1 and a season-high seven games above .500 overall. Jimmy Butler scored 19 points and Carlos Boozer had 14.

While the Bulls are galloping through the weak Eastern Conference, the Knicks are floundering.

RAPTORS 104, WARRIORS 98 TORONTO (AP) — DeMar DeRozan scored 32 points and Kyle Lowry had 13 as Toronto beat Golden State for its first victory in eight tries against Warriors guard Stephen Curry.

Greivis Vasquez and Patrick Patterson each added 12 points and Jonas Valanciunas had 10 for the Raptors, who had lost 11 of their previous 13 meetings with the Warriors.

Toronto's only previous victory over Golden State since Curry was drafted was an 83-75 home win on March

4, 2012, a victory that came while the guard was sidelined by a strained tendon in his foot.

Curry scored 34 points and David Lee had 20 points and 11 rebounds as the Warriors lost for just the second time in their past seven games.

THUNDER 116, BOBCATS 99

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — Kevin Durant scored 28 points and Russell Westbrook had 26 to lead Oklahoma City past Charlotte.

Durant made just 8 of 24 field goals, but sank all 12 of his free throws.

Westbrook was 10 of 12 from the floor in 25 minutes in his fifth game since returning from right knee surgery. Reggie Jackson scored 17 points and Serge Ibaka had 15 points and 10 rebounds for Oklahoma City, which won its second straight after losing its first three games following the All-Star break. Oklahoma City outrebounded the Bobcats 44-29.

Al Jefferson scored 25 points and Anthony Tolliver added 17 for the Bobcats, who had won four straight before losses to San Antonio and Oklahoma City. □



In this Aug. 27, 2008, file photo, Lindsay Davenport, of the United States, returns to Alisa Kleybanova, of Russia, at the U.S. Open tennis tournament in New York.

RACHEL COHEN

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Lindsay Davenport was in the middle of another major life milestone when she found out she had been elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame.

The three-time Grand Slam champion got the call when she was in a hospital about to give birth to her fourth child in early January. With daughter Haven

nearly 2 months old now, Davenport can start to reflect on the honor.

"Growing up playing tennis, getting to the Hall of Fame was never even in my dreams," she said on a conference call on Monday after the class of 2014 was announced. "It seemed a little bit too big for me."

The 37-year-old Davenport is thrilled that at the enshrinement ceremony

Lindsay Davenport elected to Tennis Hall of Fame

in Newport, Rhode Island, on July 12, her 6-year-old son Jagger will get to learn about the sport's history. He plays tennis, too.

Davenport will be joined by five-time Paralympic medalist Chantal Vandierendonck of the Netherlands in the recent player category, coach Nick Bollettieri, executive Jane Brown Grimes and British broadcaster John Barrett in the contributor category. Davenport won the 1998 U.S. Open, 1999 Wimbledon, 2000 Australian Open and 1996 Olympic gold medal to go with three major doubles titles. The American held the world No. 1 ranking for 98 weeks in her career.

That first major championship, at her home Grand Slam event, always will be special.

"For any player who has ever played with insecurity, not sure where they're supposed to be, how good they are, that really was a huge moment, not just in my career but for me personally," Davenport said. Bollettieri, now 82, has coached 10 players to the No. 1 ranking, including Andre Agassi, Jim Courier, Monica Seles and Boris Becker. In 1978, he founded the Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy, the first full-time tennis boarding school.

At a news conference in New York, Bollettieri acknowledged this was one of the few times in his life he felt at a loss for words.

"To be standing aside some of the players I've helped achieve what they are," he said, "is a dream that even Nick Bollettieri can't comprehend."

Vandierendonck was a top Dutch player before she was injured in a car accident in 1983 and went on to become a pioneer in wheelchair tennis.

Brown Grimes is a former managing director of the Women's Professional Tennis Council, now known as the WTA Tour Board; president of the U.S. Tennis Association; and president of the International Tennis Hall of Fame. Barrett was the "Voice of Wimbledon" on the BBC from 1971-06. His wife, former top-ranked player Angela Mortimer Barrett, was inducted into the Hall in 1993. Agassi and Steffi Graf are the only other married couple in the Hall. Davenport wishes she'd done a better job during her career of following Billie Jean King's advice to "enjoy the process." □

Promise and peril in an ultra-connected world

ANICK JESDANUN

AP Technology Writer

BARCELONA, Spain (AP)

— We're in the beginning of a world in which everything is connected to the Internet and with one another, while powerful yet relatively cheap computers analyze all that data for ways to improve lives.

Toothbrushes tell your mirror to remind you to floss. Basketball jerseys detect impending heart failure and call the ambulance for you.

At least that's the vision presented this past week at the Mobile World Congress wireless show in Barcelona, Spain. The four-day conference highlighted what the tech industry has loosely termed "the Internet of things."

Some of that wisdom is already available or promised by the end of the year. Fitness devices from Sony and Samsung connect

with your smartphones to provide digital records of your daily lives. French startup Cityzen Sciences has embedded fabric with heart-rate and other sensors to track your physical activities.

Internet-connected toothbrushes are coming from Procter and Gamble's Oral-B business and from another French startup, Kolibree. The mirror part is still a prototype, but Oral-B's smartphone app does tell you to floss.

Car makers are building in smarter navigation and other hands-free services, while IBM and AT&T are jointly equipping cities with sensors and computers for parking meters, traffic lights and water systems to all communicate.

Internet-connected products represent a growth opportunity for wireless carriers, as the smartphone business slows down in developed markets because most people already have service.

With the technological foundations here, the bigger challenge is getting



A woman wears the new Samsung Gear 2, right, and at the Samsung Gear Fit, left, at the Mobile World Congress, the world's largest mobile phone trade show in Barcelona, Spain, Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2014.

Associated Press

people, businesses and municipalities to see the potential. Then there are security and privacy concerns — health insurance companies would love access to your fitness data to set premiums.

At a more basic level, these systems have to figure out a way to talk the same language. You might buy your phone from Apple, your TV from Sony and your refrigerator for Samsung. It would be awful to get left out because you aren't loyal to a single company. Plus, the smartest engineers in computing aren't necessarily the best in clothing and construction.

Expect companies to work together to set standards, much the way academic and military researchers created a common language decades ago for disparate computer networks to communicate, forming the Internet. Gadget makers are starting to build APIs — interfaces for other systems to pull and understand data.

Building everything is too much for a single company,

yet "they want all this stuff to work together," said Jim Zemlin, executive director of the Linux Foundation, a backer of the Tizen project for connecting watches, cars and more. Samsung's new fitness watches will use Tizen, and tools have been built to talk with Samsung's Android phones.

As for persuading customers, IBM executive Rick Qualman said the emphasis now is on pilot projects to demonstrate the benefits, such as better deployment of equipment and personnel during a natural disaster.

At the wireless show last week, Zelitron, a Greek subsidiary of Vodafone, showed how retailers can keep track of refrigerators used to dispense bottled drinks. The system tracks temperatures and inventory, and knows if a fridge is inadvertently unplugged. Meanwhile, Cityzen hired athletes to demonstrate its connected fabric by playing basketball. Data get sent to a smartphone app using Bluetooth wireless technology.

Gilbert Reveillon, international managing director for Cityzen, said he's had interest from a U.K. car insurance company and Chinese hospitals. Health data can tell you whether you're fit to drive and can call paramedics in an emergency.

Some customers might worry about security, given recent breaches compromising credit and debit card numbers at Target and other major retailers.

Determined hackers seem to constantly find loopholes. Imagine someone spying on you remotely through security cameras in your home or tricking your home security system into believing your car is approaching, so it opens your garage door automatically.

AT&T emphasizes that it uses encryption and other safeguards for its connected services, which include security monitoring and energy-efficiency controls in homes. Glenn Lurie, AT&T's president of emerging enterprises and partnerships, said the U.S. wireless carrier

goes through extensive security certification and exceeds industry recommendations.

Reveillon said any data sharing by Cityzen will be in aggregate form, with users' identities removed. He said individual users could decide to share more, but that would be up to them. He said French regulators are quite strict on that.

But U.S. regulation isn't, and a government subpoena is typically enough to override any promises of privacy. Once the information is available, privacy advocates say, it's tempting to find other uses for it.

Jonathan Zittrain, a law professor at Harvard University, said it's difficult for people to say no when presented with immediate benefits because any potential problems are vague and years away.

"Information seems harmless and trivial at the moment, but can be recorded forever and can be combined with other data," he said. "I don't think we've come to terms with that yet." □

Global stocks slide as tensions build in Ukraine

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Rising tensions over Russia's military advance into Ukraine pushed stock markets around the world sharply lower on Monday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index dropped the most in

ket has been roiled by developments in emerging markets. Stocks slipped in January as investors worried about slowing growth in China and other emerging economies. Now a showdown in Ukraine has grabbed investors' attention and stoked fears of a

since Feb. 3. The index was down as much as 25 points at one point before recouping some of the ground it lost. The Dow Jones industrial average dropped 153.68 points, or 0.9 percent, to 16,168.03. The Nasdaq composite fell 30.82 points, or 0.7 percent,

Kelly says that the most likely scenario is that Russia and Western powers, including the U.S., will reach a compromise relatively quickly. That would send stock prices higher.

As investors sold risky stocks, they bought safer assets such as gold and U.S. government debt securities. The dollar and the Japanese yen also increased in value. The price of gold rose \$28.70, or 2.2 percent, to \$1,350.30 an ounce, its biggest gain of the year. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note, which moves inversely to its price, fell to 2.60 percent from 2.64 percent on Friday.

The price of crude following warnings by Washington and other governments that Russia, a major oil exporter, might face sanctions after it seized control of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. Russia was the world's second-largest producer of oil in 2012, accounting for 12.6 percent of global supplies, according to the International Energy Agency. The prices of crude oil climbed \$2.33, or 2.3 percent, to \$104.92 a barrel, its highest price of the year.

Russian stocks that trade in the U.S. were also hit hard. Mechel, a mining company, fell 18 cents, or 9.5 percent, to \$1.72; Phone company VimpelCom fell 51 cents, or 5 percent, to \$9.65. Energy company LukOil fell \$3.20, or 5.9 percent, to \$51.20.

The drop in stocks might also present investors with the opportunity to buy stocks at lower prices, said Terry Sandven, chief equity strategist for USBank. □



Trader Michael Zicchinolfi, left, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Monday, March 3, 2014. Global stock markets were down sharply on tensions over Russia's military advance into Ukraine and the threat of sanctions by Western governments.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

a month, following stock markets in Europe and Asia lower, as Russia's military tightened its grip on the Crimea region. Investors sold stocks and bought less risky assets such as Treasuries and gold. The price of crude oil also rose on concern that Russian oil exports could be disrupted if Western countries impose sanctions on Moscow.

It's the second time this year the U.S. stock mar-

tit-for-tat campaign of economic sanctions between Russia and Western powers. "Financial markets are doing exactly what you would expect them to," said Phil Orlando, chief equity market strategist at Federated Investors. "You have no idea what is going to happen and how this is going to play out."

The S&P 500 index fell 13.72 points, or 0.7 percent, to 1,845.73, the biggest drop

to 4,277.30.

European markets fell even more. Germany's DAX sank 3.4 percent and Russia's benchmark stock index plunged 12 percent.

"Europe gets a lot of energy supplies from Russia," said David Kelly, chief global strategist at JPMorgan funds. "So, Europe would be a lot more directly affected by a trade war with Russia than the United States would."

Men's Wearhouse, Jos. Bank signal they're talking

NEW YORK (AP) — Men's Wearhouse and Jos. A. Bank Clothiers Inc. are moving a bit closer to a possible combination, announcing they are exchanging certain confidential information with each other.

Men's Wearhouse Inc. said Monday that it's also received a draft merger agreement from Jos. A. Bank.

The news comes four days

after Jos. A. Bank, based in Hampstead, Maryland, rejected the latest acquisition bid of \$1.78 billion from Men's Wearhouse. The offer of \$63.50 per share was increased from Men's Wearhouse's prior bid of \$57.50 per share. The Houston company has said it may raise the bid to \$65 per share, if some conditions are met. While Jos. A. Bank nixed the

\$63.50 per share offer, it did say on Thursday that it was willing to meet with Men's Wearhouse to discuss the higher bid. Men's Wearhouse's \$63.50 per share offer is set to expire on March 12, unless extended. The back-and-forth between Men's Wearhouse and Jos. A. Bank started in October, when Jos. A. Bank offered to buy its larger rival for \$2.3 billion. Men's Wear-

house scoffed at that offer, and turned the tables, offering to buy its rival for \$1.54 billion. But after Jos. A. Bank turned down that overture, Men's Wearhouse increased its bid to \$1.6 billion, and then again to \$1.78 billion.

Shares of Jos. A. Bank rose 17 cents to \$62.25 in morning trading. Men's Wearhouse's stock fell 55 cents to \$53.24. □

STREET BRIEFS

Comcast to buy tech FreeWheel firm for \$320M

(AP) - Comcast is buying online ad technology firm FreeWheel Media for about \$320 million in a move that supports both its media content and cable businesses. That's according to a person familiar with the matter, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal isn't final. The purchase will help Comcast Corp. make money from ads placed on its content over a variety of platforms as FreeWheel technology evolves and gets better. FreeWheel will also continue to help other media companies profit from their own digital content, which encourages them to make more shows available on demand and on other platforms that Comcast offers to its subscribers. The person says San Mateo, California-based FreeWheel will continue to operate independently. □

Ex-Skype CEO, marketing officer out at Microsoft

REDMOND, Wash. (AP) — Microsoft says former Skype CEO Tony Bates and Chief Marketing Officer Tami Reller are leaving the company. New CEO Satya Nadella announced the news in a blog post Monday. It's his first big move since he took over from outgoing CEO Steve Ballmer last month. Chris Capossela was promoted to executive vice president and chief marketing officer, while executive vice president of advertising and strategy Mark Penn was named chief strategy officer. Nadella says in the post that the company needs to "drive clarity, alignment and intensity across all our work." He said Microsoft's goal is to work in harmony like a team of rowers, citing a passage from "The Boys in the Boat," a book about the 1936 U.S. men's Olympic gold medalist eight-oar rowing team. □

Caesars Acquisition JV plans \$1.8B in acquisitions

The Associated Press

Caesars Entertainment Corp. is selling four properties to a separate unit that it controls for about \$1.8 billion as it restructures its debt.

The sale of Bally's Las Vegas and the other three properties is valued by the company at about \$2.2

billion, when debt and renovations at the Quad Resort & Casino are included. The other assets include Harrah's New Orleans, and The Cromwell, which will open later this year and was formerly known as Bill's Gamblin' Hall & Saloon.

Caesars Acquisition Co.

expects the deal to close in the second quarter. Caesars Entertainment will manage the properties.

The deal prompted Moody's Investors Service to put Caesars Entertainment Operating Company Inc.'s ratings on review for downgrade. The rating agency said the sale by its

parent company will provide the company with the cash it needs to fund its operating losses, but is an overall negative move for its credit profile.

Moody's said given Caesars Entertainment Operating Co.'s total debt load of nearly \$21 billion, there needs to be a major re-

duction of debt to offset the lost income from the properties.

Caesars Entertainment Corp. said Monday that it expects a deeper net loss of between \$1.7 billion and \$1.82 billion in the fourth quarter on about \$2.05 billion to \$2.11 billion in revenue. □

Energy costs boosted US consumer spending in January

MARTIN CRUTSINGER

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Americans spent more in January, but the increase came from a surge in spending on heating bills during the harsh winter. Spending in areas such as autos and clothing declined.

Spending rose 0.4 percent in January after a 0.1 percent gain in December the Commerce Department said Monday. The December figure was revised down from a 0.4 percent increase.

Income grew 0.3 percent in January after no increase in December.

The overall spending increase in January reflected a 0.8 percent jump in spending on services, the effect of higher heating bills. It was the biggest increase in spending on services since October 2001. Spending on durable goods such as autos fell 0.3 percent. And spending on nondurable goods, covering things like clothing and food, dropped 0.7 percent.

"Spending looks great but is not," said Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics. Without an 11.3 percent surge in spending on utility bills, Shepherdson

said consumer spending would have been close to flat.

Consumer spending is closely watched because it drives about 70 percent of economic activity. On Friday, the government said the economy grew at a 2.4 percent annual rate in the October-December quarter, down sharply from an initial estimate of a 3.2 percent rate.

Analysts said the drop in spending on goods in January as bad weather kept people from shopping might also have held down spending in February.

"Given that the weather was unusually severe in February too, the outlook is more uncertain than usual," said Paul Dales, senior U.S. economist at Capital Economics.

The 0.3 percent rise in income was partly influenced by temporary factors, such as the start of health care coverage in several areas under the Affordable Care Act. But the expiration of benefits for some long-term unemployed people acted to reduce income. Without those special factors, income would have risen 0.2 percent in January, the government said.

Inflation as measured by a price gauge tied to con-

sumer spending remained moderate. It rose 0.1 percent in January and has risen 1.2 percent over the past 12 months, well below the Federal Reserve's 2 percent target.

Most of the revision in overall economic growth in the

durable goods than first thought. Analysts said the severe weather that hit much of the country was to blame for those reductions. Most think the harsh weather will also limit growth in the current January-March quarter.

ing cuts will support growth this year.

Many forecast that the overall economy will grow at a solid 3 percent annual rate this year, up from 1.9 percent growth in the gross domestic product last year. That would be the



Pedestrians pass an H&M storefront window advertising discounts up to 75%, in New York.

The Commerce Department reported how much consumers spent and earned in January on Monday, March 3, 2014.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

fourth quarter reflected a lower estimate for consumer spending, which grew at an annual rate of 2.6 percent during the quarter. That was down from an initial estimate of a 3.3 percent annual rate.

Part of the downward revision in spending reflected lower sales of autos and lower spending for non-

Economists generally think overall growth this quarter will dip to an annual rate of around 2 percent. But they still foresee a rebound beginning in the April-June quarter and for the rest of the year. They expect that contained employment gains and a lessening of last year's drag of higher taxes and federal spend-

best performance since the recession ended nearly five years ago.

But before growth rebounds, the economy must endure a soft patch caused by winter weather and decisions by companies to work down a build-up in their stockpiles before they step up spending again. □

Citigroup, Banamex USA disclose subpoenas

NEW YORK (AP) — Citigroup and affiliate Banamex USA have disclosed grand jury subpoenas concerning compliance with the Bank Secrecy Act and anti-money laundering requirements under federal laws and banking regulations.

Citigroup Inc. said in a

regulatory filing on Monday that the bank and Banamex USA received subpoenas from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts. Banamex USA also received a subpoena from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.

Citi says it is cooperating

fully with the inquiries.

On Friday, Citi announced that it lowered its 2013 earnings by \$235 million, saying it was a victim of fraud committed by Mexican oil services company Oceanografia S.A. de C.V., or OSA. Citi said that OSA overstated by \$400 million the business it

was doing with Mexico's state-owned oil company Petroleos Mexicanos, or Pemex. OSA used falsified invoices as collateral for \$585 million in loans from Banamex, Citigroup said. But after an investigation, Citigroup could only verify \$185 million of invoices. Citi said that it believes

the case is isolated, and it is moving to recover the money and identify anyone involved in the fraud. Mexican authorities said they have taken control of OSA, in part, to help make sure Citi recoups the funds. Shares of Citigroup fell 95 cents to \$47.68 in afternoon trading. □

Mutts

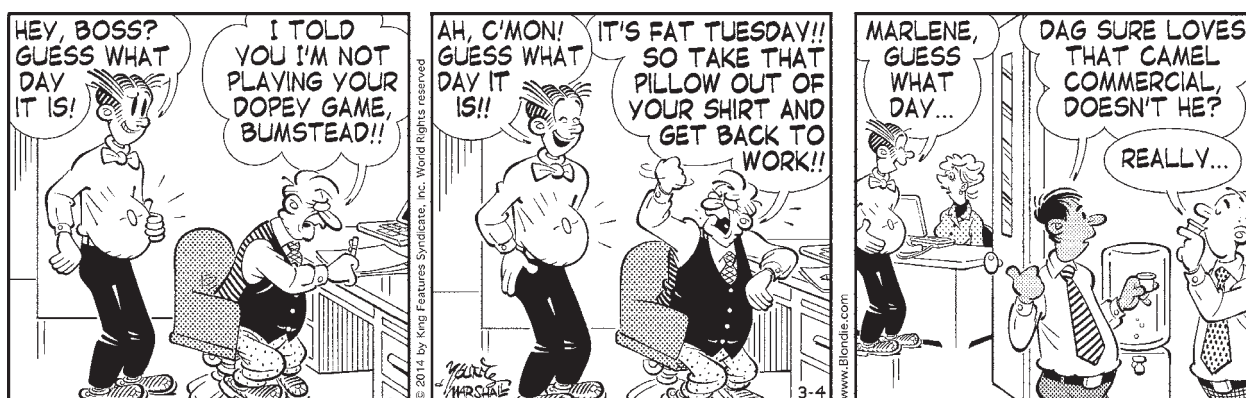


6 Chix

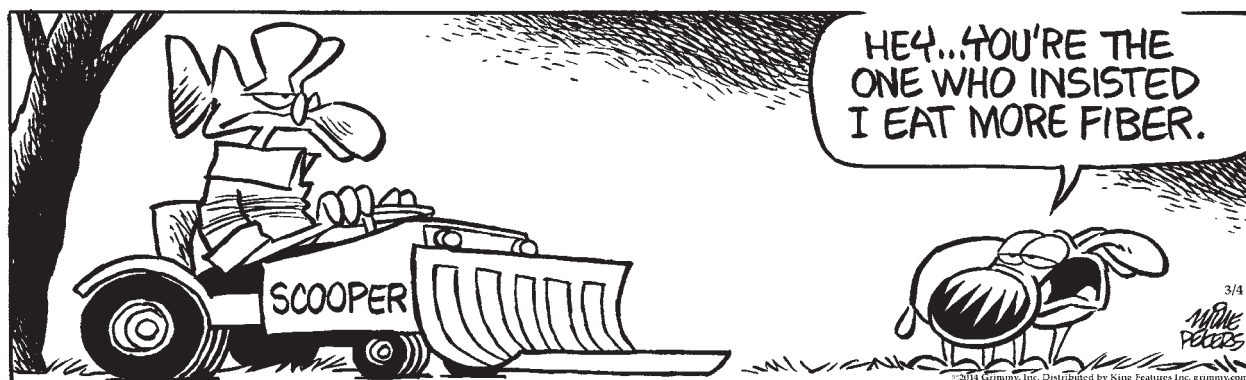


The first robin of spring always has regrets.

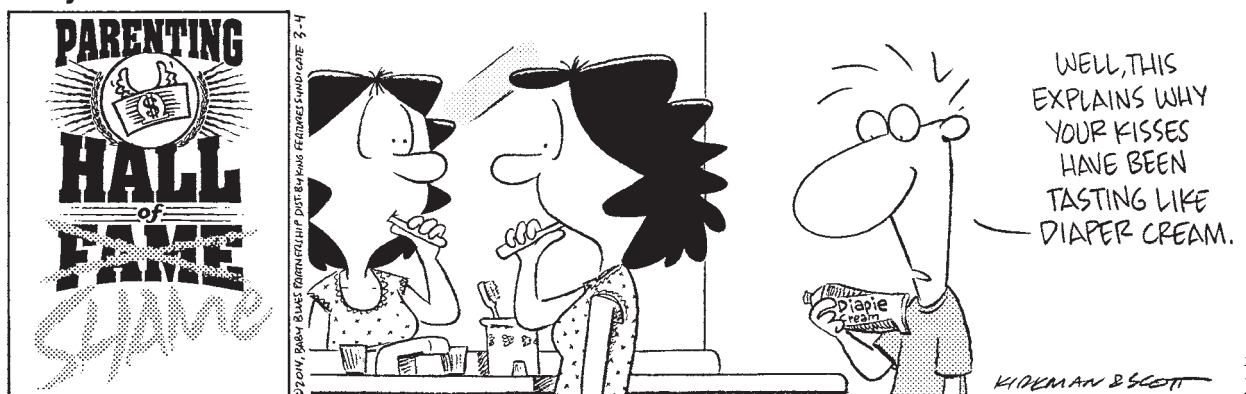
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

		4		2				
	1				3	8		
9					5		6	
				8		9	4	
4			3	1	6			5
	2	5		9				
	7		1					2
		3	6				8	
				4		5		

Difficulty Level ★★

3/04

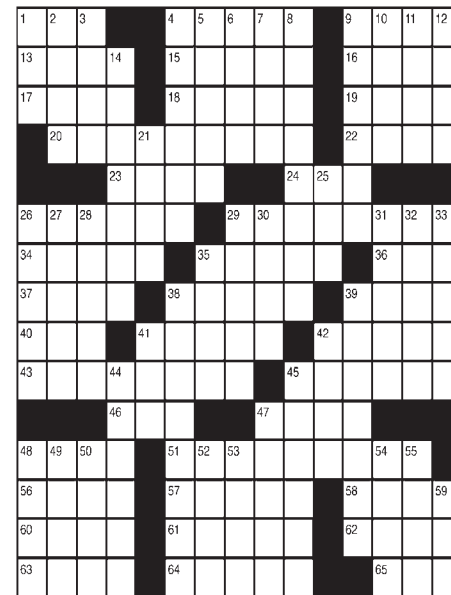
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

6	1	2	8	7	5	9	3	4
8	9	5	6	3	4	2	1	7
7	4	3	9	2	1	8	5	6
1	2	6	7	8	3	4	9	5
5	3	7	1	4	9	6	2	8
4	8	9	5	6	2	3	7	1
3	6	1	4	9	7	5	8	2
2	5	8	3	1	6	7	4	9
9	7	4	2	5	8	1	6	3

ACROSS

- 1 Pekoe or oolong
- 4 Wise men
- 9 Bump __; meet unexpectedly
- 13 Dobbin's dinner
- 15 Wed on the run
- 16 Person, place or thing
- 17 __ up; provide a support for
- 18 Songbird
- 19 Organize into categories
- 20 Details
- 22 News, for short
- 23 Cold weather wrap
- 24 " __ a deal!"
- 26 Like whirlpool's waters
- 29 Deliberately cause the failure of
- 34 Miles per hour
- 35 Young female horse
- 36 May honoree
- 37 Colors
- 38 Instrument that plays "Taps"
- 39 Indian woman's garment
- 40 In the __; ultimately
- 41 Child's caregiver
- 42 Eye color
- 43 Commandeers a plane in flight
- 45 Cure
- 46 CBS competitor
- 47 Saint topper
- 48 Very excited
- 51 Attacker
- 56 Yearn
- 57 Small brooks
- 58 __ as a pin
- 60 Riot control spray
- 61 Still breathing
- 62 "Oh, for Pete's __!"
- 63 Toboggan
- 64 Carried
- 65 Blushing



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

3/4/14

Monday's Puzzle Solved

DOWN

- 1 Spinning toy
- 2 All __; listening
- 3 Perched on
- 4 Soap opera
- 5 In flight
- 6 Asian desert
- 7 "Beowulf" or the "Iliad"
- 8 Logical
- 9 __ on; demand
- 10 Lunchtime
- 11 Layer of sod
- 12 Climb __; mount
- 14 Variety; type
- 21 TV-to-outlet connection
- 25 Gift for a child
- 26 Blaze residue
- 27 Boldness; pluck
- 28 Like neglected gardens
- 29 Omens
- 30 Actress Shedy
- 31 Astound
- 32 Pierced, as by a bull's horn
- 33 Post or Procter
- 35 In a __; depressed
- 38 Casino game
- 39 Pago Pago residents
- 41 Capture
- 42 Satan's realm
- 44 Uneven
- 45 Elevated
- 47 Cut in two
- 48 Charitable gift
- 49 Hockey score
- 50 A single time
- 52 Fodder tower
- 53 Narrow cut
- 54 Close by
- 55 __ place; occur
- 59 Actor Danson

Classifieds

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U.S.: Sea otters are recovered following 1989 spill

DAN JOLING

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— A U.S. federal study of Prince William Sound sea otters affected by crude oil spilled from the Exxon Valdez has concluded that the marine mammals have returned to pre-spill numbers a quarter century after the disaster.

Sea otters feed on clams. Crude oil from the spill remained in sediment years after the spill and likely contributed to a delay in sea otter recovery, said lead author and research biologist Brenda Ballachey. "One of the lessons we can take from this is that the chronic effects of oil in the environment can persist for decades," Ballachey said by phone Friday.

The 987-foot (300-meter) Exxon Valdez, carrying more than 53 million gallons of Alaska North Slope crude oil, strayed from shipping lanes on March 24, 1989, and struck Bligh Reef. The damaged supertanker leaked 10.8 million gallons. Crude oil flowed southwest

along nearshore waters all the way to Kodiak Island.

Responders recovered nearly 1,000 sea otter carcasses from the entire spill area.

The estimated number of immediate deaths attributed to the spill ranged from fewer than a thousand to 3,000, Ballachey said.

Sea otters rely on their thick fur to survive in cold water. Fur covered by oil loses its insulating value.

A sea otter with oiled fur must groom itself, which leads to the ingestion of oil and causes other problems, including time taken away for feeding, Ballachey said.

In the years following the spill, she said, chronic problems connected to lingering oil likely may have killed as many sea otters as in the first year. "Our modeling exercises suggest that the number of otters that died from chronic exposure was close to the same number as died from acute exposure," she said.

Researchers studied sea otters with aerial surveys and



This photo taken Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014, in Valdez, Alaska, shows a sea otter in the bay near the ferry dock.

Associated Press

annual carcass recoveries. On the demographic side of sea otter studies, scientist looked at overall numbers and the ages of animals found dead. In areas unaffected by a spill, most of the dead animals recovered are very young or very old. Carcasses recovered from heavily oiled areas of Prince William Sound showed sea otters dying in the prime of their lives.

A decade after the spill, sea otters still were not re-

turning to areas hit hard by oil, such as the Knight Island archipelago and lingering oil was detected as a reason.

Through 2007, according to an earlier study, sea otters digging in sediment were coming into contact with lingering crude oil from two to 24 times per year, Ballachey said.

Besides soiling fur, scientists detected differences in blood chemistry consistent with liver damage, Bal-

lachey said.

"We felt that low levels of exposure have been sufficient to affect survival of the population," she said.

Things got better after 2007.

By 2009, many areas of western Prince William Sound were showing a sea otter population that matched pre-spill numbers. Ages of dead animals in the heavily damaged areas now match areas that were not affected, Ballachey said. □

Expanded UNR Earthquake Lab 2nd biggest in world

RENO, Nev. (AP) — There's a whole lot of shakin' going on at the University of Nevada, Reno.

UNR's seismic-simulation facility became the largest in the United States and second largest in the world this week with an expansion that included moving three new 27-ton shake table tops into the school's new Earthquake Engineering Laboratory.

"This facility is very exciting for us because it enables us to test things we haven't been able to test before," said David Sanders, a civil engineering professor at UNR.

The shake table tops, called platens, are very large and strong surfaces onto which structures are

attached and then shaken to determine their ability to withstand damage from earthquakes. Scientists use them to conduct simulations for governments and private industry to test new techniques to build safer bridges, highways and housing.

"It gives us more versatility and more flexibility and allows us to test larger structures and more different configurations of structures," Sanders told the Reno Gazette-Journal (<http://tinyurl.com/mozgvp4>).

"Now we not only can determine the capacity of different structures (to withstand an earthquake), we also can test the structures so buildings and bridges

can stay functional after an earthquake," he said.

Each one of the three tables can carry 50 tons of weight that can shake a structure forward and back just like a real earthquake, he said.

Envision one of Disney World's rides in a simulated world where you sit in a seat that whips you around.

"It's sort of like that, but with 50 tons of weight," Sanders said.

Massive hydraulic jacks are used to move the tables and are controlled by computers to simulate the earthquakes.

The three-story Earthquake Engineering Laboratory was specifically built to accommodate the shake tables so that they could be

lined up in different shapes and contours to represent different structures during seismic events, Sanders said.

UNR's facility is one of only two facilities in the world that have four large shake tables, he said. The other is in China.

"In terms of facilities around the world and in the United States, this is one of the best facilities for testing and simulating earthquakes," Sanders said.

The laboratory conducts research and tests new designs and materials, nationally and around the world, for government agencies and private industry seeking to construct safer bridges, buildings and highways. Ian Buckle, a civil engineer-

ing professor and director of the seismic laboratory, said the new Earthquake Engineering Laboratory has more than doubled the space of the laboratory and is about 20 feet taller than the UNR's existing Large-scale Structures Laboratory.

That will allow larger structures to be tested, which will and provide more reliable results of what the impact of an earthquake would be on a full-scale structure, he said.

"It is an earthquake engineer's dream," Buckle said. Construction on the new laboratory began in November 2010. A formal dedication ceremony is scheduled on June 24 by invitation only. □

'Non-Stop' lands at No.1 at weekend box office

DERRIK J. LANG

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Liam Neeson has grounded

"The Lego Movie."

The action star's airliner thriller "Non-Stop" arrived in first place at the week-

end box office, effectively ending the Warner Bros. animated film's three-week blockade at the top spot. The Universal film stars Neeson as a federal air marshal on a doomed flight. "Non-Stop" ascended in its first weekend with \$30 million domestically and \$20 million internationally, according to studio estimates Sunday.

"I think the fact that audiences were ready for a suspense thriller has a lot to do with the film's success, and obviously Liam is an absolute box office draw," said Nikki Rocco, head of distribution for Universal. "One of the main reasons people were coming to see the film was Liam." Fox's "Son of God" debuted closely behind "Non-Stop" in second place with \$26.5 million domestically. The film recounts the story of Jesus' life using footage from the production of History Channel's 10-part miniseries "The Bible." Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office



This image released by Universal Pictures shows Liam Neeson in a scene from "Non-Stop."

Associated Press

Vandals target Spike Lee's former home after rant

NEW YORK (AP) — Vandals targeted the former Brooklyn home of filmmaker Spike Lee and the house next door after a video of one of the director's humor-laced rants against gentrification went viral. Someone spray-painted "Do the Right Thing" on the brownstone in the Fort Greene section next to Lee's family home Friday. That's the title of one of Lee's best-known movies. The Lee family house had part of the title written on the side of the stoop. The vandalism happened three days after Lee criticized gentrification of the black, working-class neighborhood during a Black History Month speech. Lee's half brother Arnold, who lives in the house that



This July 31, 2013, file photo shows filmmaker Spike Lee being interviewed on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Associated Press

was hit by vandals, told the Daily News of New York that Lee "needs to stop mentioning the house in his comments." □

tracker Rentrak, noted it was a strong showing because box office predictions for "Son of God" were wildly varied. "It's difficult to track religious- and faith-based films, as we learned with 'The Passion of the Christ,'" Dergarabedian said. "If the expectation is that Hollywood should make more movies like this, then the audiences who want these movies have to vote with

their dollars. It's only then that Hollywood will wake up and see this as a viable genre that people will want to see." "Son of God," which features Portuguese actor Diogo Morgado as Jesus, is the first of several religious-themed films set for release this year, including next month's "Noah" starring Russell Crowe and "Exodus" with Christian Bale planned for December. □

Jimmy Fallon, Chicago mayor take a chilly dip

KERRY LESTER

Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Comedian Jimmy Fallon took a quick but icy dip in Lake Michigan — dressed in a full suit and tie — eyes bulging as he darted out of the slushy water and headed straight for a pile of dry towels. "The Tonight Show" host made good on his promise to make Sunday morning's "Polar Plunge" with Mayor Rahm Emanuel as a condition for the mayor appearing on Fallon's show in New York, following an exchange of tweets and challenges. "If you hear a scream like a little girl's ... know that Jimmy Fallon is swimming in Lake Michigan," Fallon told the crowd shortly before running in. Emanuel, wearing a green Chicago Public Library T-shirt and shorts, went first, with Fallon just after. Both were soaked as they fled the water to cheers from

a large crowd. A group of bagpipers, wearing yellow rain boots and traditional kilts, provided the soundtrack for their rapid dash into the 32-degree Fahrenheit (0-degree Celsius) lake. The annual event draws several thousand hearty plungers to raise money for Special Olympics Chicago. Scores of people dressed in parkas and polar bear outfits, some carrying signs, gathered along the lakefront early, hoping to catch a glimpse of Fallon. It was 10 degrees F (minus 12 degrees C) during the plunge, and Chicago firefighters in red wetsuits waded in before the waves of brave souls, throwing chunks of ice out of the area. Seventeen-year-old high school senior Marilyn Lamanna and a friend got up at 5 a.m. to snag a spot where they hoped to watch the feat unfold. With them was a large, cardboard cutout of Fal-

lon's head, which caught his eye. He gave the shrieking girls brief hugs before darting off to take the plunge, telling them, "I've got to go meet the mayor." "Between Jimmy Fallon and the Special Olympics, it doesn't get much better than that, even though it's super cold," Lamanna said. Emanuel said last summer that if the city's children read 2 million books as part of a Chicago Public Library program called "Rahm's Readers," he'd jump in the lake. Special Olympics Chicago President Jen Kramer credits Fallon and Emanuel with attracting more than 3,000 people for the run into the lake from the city's North Avenue beach. That's more than ever; last year 2,300 people did it. Black t-shirts emblazoned with "#Swimmy Fallon" — the nickname Fallon coined in a recent tweet to the mayor — were "going like crazy," volunteer Suzy



The "Tonight Show" host Jimmy Fallon, center, exits the water during the Chicago Polar Plunge, Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Chicago. Fallon joined Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel in the event.

Associated Press

Thomas said. And numerous Fallons dotted the crowd, thanks to masks in his likeness given to attendees, strolling around the beach quarters, moving among warming tents. When Emanuel heard Fallon wanted him to appear on the show he took over in February from longtime

host Jay Leno, the mayor called the comedian and challenged him to join in the plunge. Fallon joked Wednesday that he agreed to it before realizing what it actually entailed. He also said Emanuel told him he had to "toughen up" before the mayor would appear on his show. □



In this June 2, 2013 file photo, Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale arrive at Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation's 24th Annual "A Time for Heroes" event in Los Angeles.
Associated Press

It's another boy for Gwen Stefani, Gavin Rossdale

NEW YORK (AP) — Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale's brood of boys has gotten bigger. A representative for Rossdale has confirmed that the musicians on Friday welcomed their third son, Apollo Bowie Flynn Rossdale. Rossdale tweeted news of the birth Saturday and said Bowie and Flynn were their mothers' maiden names. Apollo's brothers are

5-year-old Zuma and 7-year-old Kingston. The 48-year-old Rossdale is a musician best known as the lead singer of the rock band Bush. The 44-year-old Stefani is the lead vocalist of the band No Doubt, and has released two hit solo albums. She's also a fashion designer. The couple met in the mid-90's and were married in 2002. □



This image released by Ellen DeGeneres shows actors front row from left, Jared Leto, Jennifer Lawrence, Meryl Streep, Ellen DeGeneres, Bradley Cooper, Peter Nyong'o Jr., and, second row, from left, Channing Tatum, Julia Roberts, Kevin Spacey, Brad Pitt, Lupita Nyong'o and Angelina Jolie as they pose for a "selfie" portrait on a cell phone during the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre on Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

DeGeneres' selfie crashes Twitter

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Ellen DeGeneres' goal of setting a retweet record with her star-studded selfie was achieved before the Oscars telecast was even over. During a comic bit, the Oscars host prevailed upon actor Bradley Cooper to

take a picture with her and several other stars crowding around, including Meryl Streep, Jennifer Lawrence, Kevin Spacey, Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt. Long before midnight Sunday, the photo had been retweeted more than 2 million times, breaking a

record set by President Barack Obama with the picture of him hugging First Lady Michelle Obama after his re-election in 2012. Twitter also sent out an apology because all of the retweeting disrupted service for more than 20 minutes after 10 p.m. ET. □



This film publicity image released by Sony - Columbia Pictures shows Will Smith, left, and Jaden Smith in a scene from "After Earth."
Associated Press

DERRIK J. LANG

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Will and Jaden Smith have something they can bond over. They were both awarded Razzies for their performances in "After Earth."

Jaden was selected as worst actor for his starring role in the sci-fi flop about

a father and son stranded on an untamed earth, while the elder Smith was chosen as worst supporting actor at Saturday's Golden Raspberry Awards, which lampoons Hollywood's awards season on the eve of the Oscars. The duo was also selected as the worst screen combo by online Razzies voters.

Razzies pick Will and Jaden Smith as worst actors

Razzies organizer John Wilson noted the pair was "stranded on Planet Nepotism."

"After Earth," which was directed by M. Night Shyamalan, tied with "Movie 43" for the most prizes with three awards. The raunchy comedy anthology featuring the likes of Halle Berry, Richard Gere, Kate Winslet and Naomi Watts earned Razzies for worst picture, screenplay and director. Apparently, it took a village to craft something so loathed. The Razzies noted that "Movie 43" is credited with 13 directors and 19 screenwriters.

Tyler Perry also didn't receive any good tidings from the Razzies. Perry — as feisty alter-ego Madea — was picked as worst actress for "A Madea Christmas," while Kim Kardashian was designated worst supporting actress for her role in the drama "Tyler Perry's Temptation." Despite being the year's biggest box-office bomb, "The Lone Ranger" lassoed just one prize: worst remake, rip-off or sequel. Uncharacteristically, Adam Sandler went home empty handed at this year's Razzies. Sandler's "Grown-Ups 2" originally

led the hate-fest with eight nominations, including worst picture and actor for Sandler, but the comedy sequel wasn't awarded a single trophy. Sandler previously made Razzie history in 2011 by winning both the worst actor and actress prizes for his brother-sister cross-dressing comedy "Jack & Jill." The winners of the 34th annual Razzies were announced Saturday night at a conference center a few blocks away from the Dolby Theater, where the 86th annual Academy Awards will be presented Sunday evening. □

No Big Deal



PAUL KRUGMAN
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Everyone knows that the Obama administration's domestic economic agenda is stalled in the face of scorched-earth opposition from Republicans. And that's a bad thing: The U.S. economy would be in much better shape if Obama administration proposals like the American Jobs Act had become law.

It's less well known that the administration's international economic agenda is also stalled, for very different reasons. In particular, the centerpiece of that agenda - the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP - doesn't seem to be making much progress, thanks to a combination of negotiating difficulties abroad and bipartisan skepticism at home.

And you know what? That's OK. It's far from clear that the TPP is a good idea. It's even less clear that it's something on which President Barack Obama should be spending political capital. I am in general a free trader, but I'll be undismayed and even a bit relieved if the TPP just fades away.

The first thing you need to know about trade deals in general is that they aren't what they used to be. The glory days of trade negotiations - the days of deals like the Kennedy Round of the 1960s, which sharply reduced tariffs around the world - are long behind us.

Why? Basically, old-fashioned trade deals are a victim of their own success: There just isn't much more protectionism to eliminate. Average U.S. tariff rates have fallen by two-thirds since 1960. The most recent report on U.S. import restraints by the International Trade Commission puts their total cost at less than 0.01 percent of GDP. Implicit protection of services - rules and regulations that have the effect of, say, blocking foreign competition in insurance - surely impose additional costs. But the fact remains that, these days, "trade agreements" are mainly about other things. What they're really about, in particular, is property rights - things like the ability to enforce patents on drugs and copyrights on movies. And so it is with TPP.

There's a lot of hype about TPP, from both supporters and opponents. Supporters like to talk about the fact that the countries at the negotiating table comprise around 40 percent of the world economy, which they imply means that the agreement would be hugely signifi-

cant. But trade among these players is already fairly free, so the TPP wouldn't make that much difference.

Meanwhile, opponents portray the TPP as a huge plot, suggesting that it would destroy national sovereignty and transfer all the power to corporations. This, too, is hugely overblown. Corporate interests would get somewhat more ability to seek legal recourse against government actions, but, no, the Obama administration isn't secretly bargaining away democracy.

What the TPP would do, however, is increase the ability of certain corporations to assert control over intellectual property. Again, think drug patents and movie rights.

Is this a good thing from a global point of view? Doubtful. The kind of property rights we're talking about here can alternatively be described as legal monopolies. True, temporary monopolies are, in fact, how we reward new ideas; but arguing that we need even more monopolization is very dubious - and has nothing at all to do with classical arguments for free trade. Now, the corporations benefiting from enhanced control over intellectual property would often be American. But this doesn't mean that the TPP is in our national interest. What's good for Big Pharma is by no means always good for America. In short, there isn't a compelling case for this deal, from either a global or a national point of view. Nor does there seem to be anything like a political consensus in favor, abroad or at home.

Abroad, the news from the latest meeting of negotiators sounds like what you usually hear when trade talks are going nowhere: assertions of forward movement but nothing substantive. At home, both Harry Reid, the Senate majority leader, and Nancy Pelosi, the top Democrat in the House, have come out against giving the president crucial "fast-track" authority, meaning that any agreement can receive a clean, up-or-down vote.

So what I wonder is why the president is pushing the TPP at all. The economic case is weak, at best, and his own party doesn't like it. Why waste time and political capital on this project?

My guess is that we're looking at a combination of Beltway conventional wisdom - Very Serious People always support entitlement cuts and trade deals - and officials caught in a 1990s time warp, still living in the days when New Democrats tried to prove that they weren't old-style liberals by going all in for globalization. Whatever the motivations, however, the push for TPP seems almost weirdly out of touch with both economic and political reality.

So don't cry for TPP. If the big trade deal comes to nothing, as seems likely, it will be, well, no big deal. □



From the Pyramid to the Square



THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
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The Egyptian strongman Field Marshal Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi was recently in Moscow visiting with Russian strongman Vladimir Putin. Putin reportedly offered el-Sissi \$2 billion in arms - just what a country like Egypt, where half the women can't read, needs. The whole meeting struck me as so 1960s, so Nasser meets Khrushchev - two strongmen bucking each other up in the age of strong people and superempowered individuals. Rather than discuss arms sales, el-Sissi and Putin should have watched a movie together. Specifically, el-Sissi should have brought a copy of "The Square" - the first Egyptian film ever nominated for an Oscar. It's up this year. El-Sissi has a copy. Or, to be more precise, his film censor's office does. For the past few months, the Egyptian authorities have been weighing whether to let the film - an inspiring and gripping documentary that follows six activists from the earliest days of the Tahrir Square revolution in 2011 until the Muslim Brotherhood was ousted by el-Sissi in 2013 - to be shown in Egypt.

Meanwhile, pirated and downloaded copies of the film, which is also on Netflix, have spread virally across Egypt and been viewed by many Egyptians in homes and coffee shops and discussed on social media. What's more, it was recently dubbed into Ukrainian and downloaded (some 300,000 times) by protesters there and shown in the Maidan, which also means the Square, in Kiev. A dubbed version is now spread-

ing in Russia, too, said the film's director Jehane Noujaim, who also directed "Control Room."

"This is the globalization of defiance," Noujaim said to me. "With cheap, affordable cameras and Internet connections, anyone now can change the conversation" anywhere. It's true.

The film resonates with those who gathered in squares from Cairo to Caracas to Kiev, added the film's producer, Karim Amer, because it captures an increasingly universal phenomenon: average people uniting and deciding "that the Pharaoh, the strongman, won't protect us" and the religious sheikh "won't cleanse us." We can be and must be "authors of our own story." It has long been said, added Amer, that "history is written by the victors. Not anymore." Now versions can come from anywhere and anyone. Power is shifting "from the pyramid to the square" - from strongmen to strong people - "and that is a big shift."

And that's why Putin and el-Sissi need to see the film. (Disclosure: the filmmakers are friends of mine, and I have been discussing their project with them for two years.) It captures some of the most important shifts happening today, starting with fact that in today's hyperconnected world, wealth is getting concentrated at the top, but, at the same time, power is getting distributed at the bottom and transparency is being injected everywhere. No palace will remain hidden by high walls, not even the giant one reportedly being built for Putin on the Black Sea.

But people now can't just see in, they can see far - how everybody else is living. And as Tahrir and Kiev demonstrate, young people will no longer tolerate leaders who deprive them of the tools and space to realize their full potential. The Square has a Facebook page where Egyptians are invited to answer questions, including: "Who would you most like to watch

this movie with?" One answer, from Magda Elmaghrabi, probably spoke for many: "I would watch it with my dad who passed away 9 years ago. He immigrated to the States not for lack of wealth, but for his fears of what would happen in the future for Egypt and whether there would be opportunities for my 2 older brothers. I would love to have discussed what occurred and see his emotional reaction as the Egyptians stood up for what they believed in."

Another reason Putin, el-Sissi and all their protesters need to see "The Square" is that it doesn't have a happy ending - for anyone, not yet. Why? The Egyptian protesters got sidelined by the army, because while they all wanted to oust the Pharaoh, they couldn't agree on a broader reform agenda and translate that into a governing majority. But Putin and el-Sissi will also lose if they don't change, because there is no stable progress without inclusive politics and economics. I understand the need and longing by those not in the squares for "stability" and "order." Putin and el-Sissi both rose to power on that longing for stability after so much revolutionary ferment. But both men have to be asked: Stability to do what? To go where? To jail not just real terrorists, but, in el-Sissi's and Putin's cases, legitimate journalists and opposition and youth leaders? Many Asian autocrats imposed order, but they also built schools, infrastructure and a rule of law that nurtured middle classes that eventually delivered democracy.

So the protesters are long on idealism but short on a shared political action plan. El-Sissi and Putin are long on stability but short on a politics of inclusion tied to a blueprint for modernity (and not just rising oil prices). Unless they each overcome their deficiencies, their countries will fail to fulfill their potential - and all their "squares" will be stages for conflict, not launching pads for renewal. □

Magnificent Twin Grand Parades close Aruba's Carnaval #60!



Continued from Page 13

Following Friday night & Saturday mornings 'Jouvert Morning' Pajama Party, revelers enjoyed the Grand Parade of San Nicolas, which took place all day Saturday in downtown San Nicolas. Before partygoers could catch their breath, the last parade of the season, Oranjestad's Grand Parade, roared through downtown Oranjestad from 1pm till the sun set into the Caribbean Sea! As we here on the island have already begun preparing for Aruba's Carnaval #61, we hope you have already begun making your travel arrangements to return to join in the fun next year! □